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No. 1.—Group of War Clubs, etc.

2, 2. Cannibal forks for eating human flesh.
3, 3. Small "yagona" (grog) bowls.
4. Conch shell, for war signals.
5. Fijian pillow.
6. Mallet for beating out "tappa."

# A TRIP

TO THE

# HIGHLANDS OF VITI LEVU;

BEING

A description of a series of Photographic Views taken in the Fiji Islands during the dry season of 1881,

BY

GERRARD ANSDELL, F.C.S.

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# THE HIGHLANDS OF VITI LEVU.

## Part I.—*Suva* and the *Rewa*.

VITI LEVU (Great Fiji), as probably most of my readers already know, is the largest of that beautiful group of islands, situated in the South Pacific Ocean, between 16° and 19° S. Lat., and 177° E. and 178° W. Long., and forming the Fiji Archipelago.

The annexation of the group by Great Britain, in the autumn of 1874, and the events which led up to it, have been so well described by Miss Gordon Cumming, in her book "At Home in Fiji," that it is useless to repeat them here, and as the present pamphlet is merely the diary record of a shooting, fishing, and photographic tour to the interior of Viti Levu, I shall confine myself to a description of that island, although I afterwards visited most of the principal islands of the group.

I started from Melbourne with a younger brother, C., on the 24th of March, 1881, our intention being to "look up" an elder brother, whom we had not seen for many years, and whom we knew to be coffee planting somewhere in Fiji, although our ideas were very vague as to where he really was, or how we were to get to him.



1/12

We took our passages in the S. S. "Suva," a small tub of about 150 tons, belonging to Messrs. McEwan and Co., of Melbourne, who are also the largest store-keepers in Fiji: she was a very small boat for a journey of 2,200 miles, and most inconveniently crowded, two small cabins being all the accommodation wherewith to stow away the four ladies, four gentlemen, and two children we had on board as passengers, but, as she was the only steamer running from Melbourne at the time, we had to make the best of it.

After a very rough passage of 12 days, which made me think what a terrible misnomer the *Pacific* Ocean was (I had a sort of notion that it was always calm in the Pacific), we arrived outside the reef at Suva Harbour at about 11 p.m. on April 5th, and, after slowly working our way through the narrow passage, which is about half-a-mile long by 600 yards wide, anchored at midnight off the embryo town of Suva, the future capital of Fiji. We sighted no land, after leaving Australia, until the seventh day out, when we had a distant view of the "Peak" (a curious sharp-pointed rock, rising some 800 feet shear out of the sea), and a run along the northern shore of Kadavu, one of the largest and most southerly of the Fiji group, on the morning of our last day. Mount Washington, on the latter island, 2,600 feet high, with its bright green covering of thick bush, and the white sandy shore, fringed with cocoa-nut palms, looked very refreshing after our 12 days' imprisonment, for we were none of us sorry that the voyage had come to an end, although the captain, a thorough good fellow, had done his best to make us comfortable, and the "Suva" had proved herself a good sea boat, notwithstanding her small size.

On dropping our anchor, the captain immediately hoisted a green light, and blew the steam whistle for the doctor, as the government is most particular about the medical inspection of all vessels arriving in the colony since the terrible epidemic of measles in

No. 2.—Fijian Ornaments, etc. :—

1, 1, 1, 1. Whale's teeth necklaces.
2, 2. Pig's tusks necklaces.
3, 3, 3. Single whale's teeth (peace offerings).
4. Brain platter.
5. Small war clubs.
6. War conch, with ornamented handle.
7. "Lali," or small drum.
8. Fijian pillow.
9. Necklace of snake's vertebræ.

No 4.—Large and small "yaqona" bowls, fish platters, and war fans.

1875, which killed some 40,000 of the natives; however, the doctor seemed to think that bed was the proper place at that time of night, for he resolutely refused to stir, which "riled" the captain so much, that he continued making the most unearthly noise with the whistle, at intervals of about 15 minutes, until 2 a.m., when, finding it utterly hopeless, he blessed the doctor, and recommended us to get a few hours sleep before day-break. We were much disappointed at not arriving in day-light, as our fellow passengers had given us such a glowing description of Suva Harbour, but the intense heat, and the damp, earthy, hot-house smell off the shore, prepared us for the dense mass of tropical vegetation we were to see on the morrow.

On coming on deck, about 6.30 a.m., I found that we were moored alongside an old hulk, which serves, until a proper quay is built, as a depôt for all cargo until it has passed the customs, and that Dr. Corney was already on board. He turned out to be a great friend of my brother's, and insisted on C. and myself putting up at his bungalow during our stay in Suva, and at once took us off to have some breakfast.

Whilst being pulled ashore in his gig by four Polynesian boys, dressed in a neat uniform of blue and white, I had time to admire Suva Harbour, which takes the form of an irregular semicircle, opening towards the south, and—probably because it was my first view of a tropical country—I thought I had never seen anything so beautiful. The town itself is situated on the gently sloping beach of the eastern side of the harbour, and is immediately backed by a range of low, but steep hills, a few hundred feet in height, on which are perched the bungalows of all the principal inhabitants, surrounded by cocoa-nut palms, bananas, bread-fruit trees, crotans, and many other tropical shrubs. All round the northern and western sides of the bay the land rises rather rapidly from the sandy shore, in a continuous succession of curious shaped hills, gradually increasing

in height, until they culminate, several miles inland, in a fine range of rugged peaked mountains, from 4,000 to 5,000 feet high, the whole, except a few of the highest and most fantastically shaped summits, being clothed with the densest mass of vegetation of every imaginable shade of green.

The ubiquitous verdure probably struck us the more from the contrast it presented to Victoria, which we had left at the end of the summer, when several months' drought had withered every blade of grass, and the numerous bush fires had scorched the eucalyptus out of all recognition, giving the whole country the most desolate appearance.

Near the western side of the bay (which is about five miles across), and right opposite the town of Suva, is a small coral island, used as a quarantine station, and the thin white line of breakers, and ceaseless roar of the surf across the entrance of the harbour, indicate where the protecting coral reef stretches for miles round the coast of Viti Levu, keeping the waters within as calm as a pond in the roughest weather.

On the way up to the doctor's bungalow, which occupies the highest position of any in the place, he explained to us the formation of the new town, which has been chosen to supersede Levuka as the capital of Fiji on account of its healthier situation, greater facility for extension, and also for its finer harbour, besides being on the largest island in the group, and in close proximity to the Rewa River, where the principal planting operations are being carried on. The future town has been systematically laid out in blocks and streets, the principal of the latter being the Victoria Parade, which extends along the sea beach for upwards of a mile, and can be carried along almost *ad infinitum;* here the largest stores are being built, and, as the roadway is well "metalled" with coral, and planted with fine foliage and flowering trees throughout its entire length, it is no doubt, in a few years' time, destined to become the fashionable

No. 3.—"Likus," native dresses made from grass, fibre, etc.

promenade of Fiji. Several public buildings were being rapidly pushed on, the law courts especially, built of wood, with red shingle roofing, looking very neat and appropriate to the country, and presenting a pleasing contrast to the numerous stores erected entirely of corrugated iron, which, though easily put up and wonderfully convenient, are not only most unsightly objects, but must be like ovens in such a climate.

A sort of soap-stone enters largely into the formation of the soil, and is most objectionable, being too soft and chalky for building purposes, and as slippery as ice in the wet weather; mud is also an objectionable feature in Suva after rain, and the whole place is riddled with holes made by the myriads of land crabs which swarm everywhere. Another great drawback to Suva is the long stretch of black, muddy sand the tide leaves on receding, which makes the shore quite unfit for bathing, and does not improve its appearance; this is the more annoying, because the north and west shores of the harbour are composed of beautiful white sand. Yet another inconvenience at present is the absence of any water supply, for, with the exception of a few insignificant springs, the inhabitants have to depend on their rain-tanks for their morning tub, a more than ever indispensable luxury in a tropical climate. On our return, several months afterwards, we found the place almost entirely destitute of water, after a fortnight's dry weather, and if it had not been for an enterprising barber, who, foreseeing the difficulty, had put up the largest tank in Suva, we should have been compelled to take to the muddy shore; as it was, the barber was making a small fortune in shillings, which he charged for shower baths, and as he would on no account permit the use of soap, we had a strong suspicion that the water found its way up into the tank again; however, "where ignorance is bliss," etc.

There is no real difficulty about the water supply, as any quantity of excellent

water can be brought from about six miles up the river Tamavua, which falls into the harbour on the north shore, and as there are no engineering difficulties in the way, and the expense moderate, the work has probably been commenced before now.

We learnt from Dr. Corney that our brother E.'s plantation was situated at the head of the Rewa, the largest river in Fiji, which drains the greater part of the mountain ranges in the centre of Viti Levu, and falls into the sea about 15 miles to the east of Suva—in fact, a good three days' journey. We should have to wait until a steamer was going, which would take us a short way up the river, and would then have to accomplish the other two days' journey in a canoe.

The communication between Suva and the river was most erratic at that time, and depended entirely on the sweet will of the owners of a few small coasting steamers, which dodged about the islands entirely to suit their own convenience, although they were supposed to be passenger boats. I was told it was sometimes fully a fortnight before there was any chance of getting round, so that we were fortunate in only having waited three days, when a steamer called the "Go a-head" was advertised to sail for the Rewa.

We seized the opportunity, and embarked at once, taking with us a canoe, lent us by the doctor, and trusting to luck to get some natives to take us on to our destination.

We got under way at about 10 a.m., and skirting along the south-east coast, inside the reef, crossed Laucala Bay, where the effect of a fine mirage on the numerous palm-covered coral islands was very curious, giving them the appearance of being suspended many yards in the air, whilst the surf on the reef seemed to break into space itself.

After steering a zig-zag course through two lines of black and white posts, placed out in the bay to mark the channel, we entered a very narrow opening in the land,

which proved to be a sort of backwater or passage into the river, fringed with mangroves and cocoa-nut palms, and only navigable at high tide. After twisting and turning about for a mile or so, disturbing numerous flocks of wild fowl, we suddenly emerged into the Rewa itself, just above its numerous mouths, which have cut channels through the mangrove swamps in every direction. The river at this point must be fully a quarter of a mile broad, and contains an immense volume of water, considering the smallness of its drainage area, for the whole of the island is only 150 miles long by about 60 miles broad. It is navigable for small sized steamers for 10 or 15 miles, up which far it is still affected by the tide, and steam launches and punts can go at least another 15 miles.

The large native town of Rewa is situated just where we emerged into the river, on a delta formed by two of the mouths, and its chief used to be celebrated as one of the worst cannibals and most powerful princes in Fiji. A small hotel now occupies a prominent position close to the town, and a fine church and Wesleyan mission station show how things have altered since that time.

All the afternoon we steamed slowly up the river, passing several cleared paddocks with the first cattle I had seen, and wondering whether the skipper had really named his vessel the "Go a-head" out of sarcasm, for no amount of puffing and blowing could get more than four miles an hour out of her, and a native, who accompanied us along the bank for several miles, easily kept his own at a sharp walk. It is true, one could not expect much speed out of a punt, sharpened at each end, with an engine placed in the centre, which was what she resembled more than anything else, but the title was certainly misleading; however, the skipper seemed very proud of her, and I believe frequently crosses over to Levuka, a distance of 60 miles across the open sea, so I suppose she is safer than she looks.

On the way up we passed Mr. Stanlake Lee's new sugar mill on the left bank, and a short distance above, on the same side, the enormous sugar mills, in course of erection, belonging to the "Colonial Sugar Co.," which, when finished, will be capable of turning out 40 tons of sugar a-day; this mill alone will require several thousand acres under sugar cane to keep it going, which will give some idea of the proportions this industry has already attained in the country.

About half a mile above the large mills, on the right bank of the river, we came to the Wai Manu, a large tributary of the Rewa. A new hotel, belonging to our skipper, had just been opened at the junction, so of course we pulled up for a yarn.

There is a bridle track from here, across the country, to Suva, a distance of about 20 miles, which will no doubt be made into a good road when the capital has progressed a little, and will shorten the distance to the Rewa river considerably.

Just across the Wai Manu is the large Fijian town of Navousa, the head quarters and country seat of Adi (Princess) Kuilla, a daughter of Cakobau, King of Fiji; she receives a pension from Government of £500 a-year, and is a woman of about 40 years of age, nearly six feet high, and immensely stout; I had the pleasure of an introduction to her afterwards, in Levuka, and found her very affable. She is generally liked by the white part of the community, but I believe is a regular tartar amongst her own subjects.

A few miles beyond the Wai Manu the river takes a very sharp turn to the left, at the same time spreading out round two picturesque wooded islands in mid stream; here, on the left bank, is the police station of the district, and a charming spot it is. The row of Fijian-built houses, with thatched roofs and wide verandahs, do not recall one's idea of a prison, and the large gardens of pine-apples, bananas, limes, etc.,

No. 5.—Five specimens of printed "tappa" (native cloth).

1, 1. Native pottery, made from red clay and glazed.
2. Head of hair belonging to a "Kai Colo," or mountain man.

grown by the prisoners, make the place look most inviting. As a matter of fact there is no real hardship in it, and, indeed, the natives seem to rather prefer being in prison than otherwise, for they get plenty of yams to eat and tobacco to smoke—and what does a Fijian want more? He is frequently sent, while a prisoner, on messages miles away, but always returns, and I have even heard of natives being sent 20 miles by themselves to the police station, with an order for their own imprisonment, which they never fail to deliver.

It now commenced to get rapidly dark, scarcely allowing us to get a glimpse of Mr. Waterston's Sugar Mills and bungalow, which we passed on the left bank, and when we anchored a few miles higher up, off the Rewa Sugar Company's Mills, at 6 p.m., the last streak of daylight had gone. Some Polynesian boys, who were lounging on the wharf, helped us with our baggage up to Sthulman's Hotel, where we turned in for the night, after eating as good a supper as the mosquitoes, which swarmed in countless thousands, would allow us.

This was as far as the steamer could take us, and was about 20 miles from the mouth of the river. It is the most important settlement on the river, and can already boast of a large hotel, a good store, a church, and Church of England minister, besides a school and several other buildings; it is, moreover, in the centre of a large sugar district, and will soon develop into a respectable town as the planting operations increase. The Rewa Sugar Company's Mills are close to, and there are two other small ones in close proximity.

The next morning we unshipped our canoe, and began to look about for some natives to take us up the river, but this we found by no means an easy job, and we should probably have been delayed the whole day, had not the manager of the Rewa

Mills, seeing our difficulty, kindly lent us two of his Polynesian boys. With these we made a start at 2 p.m., but, not being used to the work, they paddled very slowly, and did not seem to understand poling, which is the way the Fijians always travel up stream; it was, consequently, long after dark when we arrived at Vuni Cibi Cibi, a planter's house, at which we were to stay the night. We had passed several more sugar estates during the afternoon, and some prettily situated bungalows, one especially, belonging to a German naturalist, in a most commanding position, on a hill some 200 feet high, immediately overlooking the river.

I must say I felt some misgivings at walking up to the man's house where we landed and demanding a night's lodging, but I was told it was the custom of the country, and indeed the planter himself soon put our minds at rest, by the hearty way he received us. We had a long yarn about the "auld country"—for he came from the Emerald Isle—and turned in soon after supper, as we wanted to make an early start in the morning, having a journey of fully twenty miles before us.

Six a.m. found us ready to set off, but the Polynesian boys had returned overland to the Rewa mills during the night, and left us in the same difficulty about men as we were before. Our host could not spare any of his own men, and although there was a small village on the opposite side of the river, not a single native would accompany us; they all said it was too far, or wanted too much money, or made some other excuse. In vain we shouted, until we were hoarse, at every canoe full of natives going up the river, but all to no purpose, until at last we persuaded two Fijians who were going up past my brother's plantation, to get out of their own canoe and take us up in ours for three shillings a head, which our host thought an exorbitant price; however, as it appeared to be our only chance, we closed with them, and got away by

No. 6.—Large Fern in the bush near Na Soqo.

10 a.m., taking a bunch of bananas, a basketful of oranges, and some biscuits for lunch.

We now had an opportunity of seeing what canoe travelling really was like, and found it a very different thing from our experience with the Polynesian boys of the preceding day. Our boatmen used long bamboo poles (one of them standing at each extreme end of the canoe) with which they pushed us along against the now strong and rapid current at a wonderful speed; they never seemed to tire, and kept on for hours together without any intermission, occasionally crossing from one side of the river to the other, to take advantage of any still or shallow water.

After about two miles we passed the second tributary of the Rewa, also on the right bank, and called the Wai Dina.

Near the junction was the last white man's habitation we were to see until reaching E.'s plantation, so that he was evidently completely in the wilds.

The main stream above the junction with the Wai Dina is called the Wai-na-Buka (the wooded waters), and the scenery became more wild and beautiful every mile we ascended.

We were gradually approaching a fine range of hills in the interior, but the country in the immediate vicinity of the river was still tolerably flat, and the banks, although no great height, were covered with many fine foliage plants, amongst which the tree ferns, bananas, tapioca, and several species of palms were most conspicuous, besides many other species of broad-leaved shrubs, of which I did not then know the names. As the planters' houses became scarce, the native villages appeared to increase in number, and nearly every bend of the river discovered some prettily situated group of thatched houses, imbedded in the vegetation. A deputation of villagers always came

down to the water's-edge to inspect us, and have a running conversation with our boatmen as we passed, who no doubt told them much more about us and our affairs than they themselves knew, but as we did not understand a word, they had it all their own way.

It takes some little time to get used to seeing both the men and women innocent of any clothing, except a banana leaf shredded up, which is tied by the midrib round the loins; but one soon gets to look upon it as quite natural, and in keeping with the surroundings—and, besides, the dark copper-coloured skin takes off any appearance of nakedness.

About two miles above the junction, on the right bank, is the large native village of Viria, the chief town, so to speak, of the Upper Rewa district. We could only see a few houses from the water, but judging from the numerous canoes of all sizes on the beach, and the number of people about, it was evidently an important place. The first appearance of a rapid was met with here, after which they became rather frequent, the last two or three before reaching our journey's end being very strong and swift, requiring considerable skill and strength to pole a canoe up them. We saw a good many ducks, but they were all so wild that I only managed to bag one out of several very long shots.

Towards evening numerous large bats flapped lazily across the river at a great height, on the look-out for their supper of wild fruit, and several grey cranes kept flying along, and settling in front of us, for miles. I began to think we should never reach Na Soqo, which was the name of E.'s plantation, although our boatmen always answered our frequent gesticulations by "sa voleka" (it is near). If I had known a Fijian's idea of distance, as I afterwards frequently did, to my cost, I should not have been so

No. 7.—Waterfall on the Wai-na-Buka.

surprised when we continued for hour after hour without arriving; however, just as it was getting quite dark, we came to the third splitting-up of the river, where it divides into two streams of about the same size. One continues on in the same northerly direction, under the old name of the Wai-na-Buka, whilst the other turns sharply round to the left, forming the right-hand branch, and is called the Wai-na-Mala (Mala being the name of a small fish). Up the latter branch we turned, and, after rounding a sharp corner up a very stiff rapid, we saw a light glimmering high up on the right bank, about half a mile away. The Lord be praised! this was Na Soqo at last, and the prospect of a dinner and a stretch cheered us up a bit, for it was nearly 7 p.m., and nine hours in a canoe was quite enough for one day, both of us feeling stiff and tired after being cramped up in such a small space. Luckily we had had lovely weather since leaving Suva, without a drop of rain, or our condition would have been very much worse.

We could just see that the bungalow was built on a huge rock about 80 feet above the river, and on nearing it we blazed off our guns to let them know of our arrival. We saw a great commotion on the verandah, and E. and his wife came down to the landing-place to meet us. But who can depict his astonishment when he found out who we were? It took a long time to convince him altogether of our identity, as he had seen neither of us for ten years, and thought me still in London, and C. safely settled down in Australia. Of course, the questions he had to ask about mutual friends, etc., were interminable, and we talked all night through and well on towards four o'clock in the morning before we thought of getting to bed.

On stepping on to the verandah the next morning, I don't think I was ever more impressed by the beauty of a view. The site of the bungalow is well chosen, on the highest point of land for miles around, and commands an extensive panorama of the

country round three parts of the compass, the thick bush immediately behind the coffee-clearing to the south, shutting out the view in that direction. A large alluvial flat stretches for miles towards the north-west, through which the river Wai-na-Mala may be seen now and again winding its irregular course, finally sweeping round the base of the rock on which the bungalow stands, and joining the Wai-na-Buka about half-a-mile below, where a small store is kept by two white men for trading with the natives. The land towards the north and east rises more rapidly from the river, in a succession of undulating hills, amongst which are dotted numerous villages, some of them situated in the most inaccessible-looking places. A high and picturesque range of mountains some ten miles away to the north-west completes the view in that direction, and, of course, the whole country is clothed with a uniform covering of wild bush, out of which the lofty "baka" trees (Fiji banyan), with their conspicuous dark green foliage, raise their heads far above the surrounding vegetation. The absolute silence and feeling of repose about the whole scene was most impressive, and was broken only at long intervals by the booming of some enormous "lali" (a Fijian drum, made by hollowing out the stem of a tree like a canoe, and beating on the side with two sticks, and which can be heard for many miles), calling the people together in the morning to hear the directions of the town-crier for the day, or the strange weird sound of the "conch" (a large species of shell), which was used as a war signal in former times, but is now employed in the more peaceful occupation of frightening the parrots out of the ripening corn.

I took a panoramic view of the country, but the negatives were unfortunately spoilt on their way to England; however, the position of the bungalow will be well seen from several of the others.

No. 8 shows the south side of the bungalow away from the river; it was built

No. 8.—Bungalow at Na Sooo, from the south-east.

No. 9.—Coffee rows at Na Soqo plantation.

by Fijians from a neighbouring village, and, to my mind, is by far the best sort of house for the climate. The thick covering of thatch keeps it beautifully cool in the hottest weather, and is also impervious to the rain, while the system of dividing the house into rooms, by reed partitions about seven feet high, keeps up a thorough circulation of the air, although it is rather awkward until you get accustomed to it, as you are very apt to discuss your neighbour's weak points, forgetting that he might just as well be in the same room. The group of orange trees on the left were some of the finest I had seen anywhere, and were loaded with ripe fruit when we arrived. Bananas, of which there is a large clump on the right-hand side, of course grow everywhere, and the rows of pine-apples, planted immediately below the bungalow, were just ripening. The latter fruit grows to great perfection in Fiji, and, with the exception of the English hot-house pine, is the finest I have ever tasted. The plants give the largest crop of fruit about November, the beginning of the wet season, but bear more or less all the year round, and a single plant will yield six or eight pines at the same time, often weighing from 12 to 15 lbs. a-piece. But the most delicious fruit grown in the country is the "grenadillo," a large variety of passion fruit imported from the West Indies. It is a rapid-growing vine, with a fine purple flower, and the fruit when ripe is about the size, shape, and colour of a large vegetable marrow; the large cavity in the centre is filled with seeds surrounded with a juicy pulp, and is eaten with a spoon, after cutting the top off the fruit. It has a delicate flavour, something like vanilla, which the bats also seem to appreciate, to judge from the ravages they make on a vine if it is not properly protected. E.'s wife has also a beautifully laid-out flower-garden, gay with scarlet and variegated hibiscus, yellow jasmine, pomegranate flowers, crotans, roses, and single and double gardenias which latter grow in the greatest profusion, and

scent the air almost too powerfully with their fine perfume. Roses grow and flower well at this height (about 400 feet) above the sea, but have to be pruned at least four times a year, so great is the growth of all vegetable life. I have seen French beans sown, and have had them on the table in a month; radishes grow the size of carrots, and everything else in the same proportion, while all the fences made of green wood rapidly grow into small trees.

In the afternoon, of course, we had to go round the plantation, which, although only fifteen months old, appeared to be in a very forward condition. I took several views of the coffee, which will give a better idea of the appearance of a young plantation than any description of mine, and will merely say a few words about the manner of cultivating it. The plant is originally grown from the seed, which is thickly sown in rows, forming a sort of nursery. When it reaches a few inches in height, it is either planted out at once, or is allowed to increase in strength for some months, and is then "stumped"—*i.e.*, the top taken off and planted out as before. The trees are placed in rows from six to eight feet apart, and are "topped" when they reach a height of from three feet six inches to four feet, which enables them to throw out their lateral branches with more vigour. In the course of three or four years the lateral branches of the different trees meet, and effectually put a stop to the growth of weeds beneath, which are a great trouble in the early stages of the plant, and grow at such a rate that, unless the whole plantation is weeded once a fortnight, they completely smother everything. Of course, the trees have to be "pruned," "handled," etc., every year, and yield their first full crop when from four to five years old, after which they ought to go on bearing for fifteen or twenty years at least.

Most of the trees in the accompanying photographs (Nos. 9, 10, and 11) have

No. 10.—Coffee plantation and bungalow at Na Soqo.

No. 11.—Polynesian labour boys on the plantation.

been topped at fifteen months old, which, I believe, is a wonderfully rapid growth when compared to Ceylon. The soil is a reddish loam, and is no doubt principally alluvial; it is 15 feet or 16 feet deep, so is practically inexhaustible, for coffee does not impoverish it in the same way as sugar-cane.

The next few days were spent in taking photographs of the plantation and roaming about the neighbouring bush, of which I never tired. The variety of vegetable life seemed endless, and I only regretted not being a sufficient botanist to recognise the the different forms. I noticed, however, many lycopods, and a few tree and ground orchids, a pretty rose-coloured variety of the latter being very plentiful, and ferns were so numerous that I collected ninety different species, within half-a-mile of the bungalow, amongst which a small climbing variety called the "Wah kalou" (God's thread), was especially elegant.

The natives must be wonderfully observant, for they have a name for every plant and tree. I often tried to puzzle them, and only once found a man at a loss for the name of a tree; but he was not to be done, and promptly got over the difficulty by calling it a "Kau na vikau" (bush tree), which, however, was not very explanatory.

Leaf, bark, and stick insects of all sorts were numerous enough, but so closely resembled the things they imitated, that they wanted very careful looking for, and I several times came across a fine chamelion lizard about 15 inches long, with a high ridged, serrated back and tail, and of a bright green colour banded with blue. Fortunately there are no venemous snakes or reptiles of any sort throughout the islands, and even the insects appear to be perfectly harmless, with the exception of the ever-present mosquito, a minute sandfly, and a small stinging phosphorescent centipede. There are, however, plenty of harmless snakes, which the natives esteem a great delicacy, and are

indeed reserved, as a rule, for the chiefs, as being something too delicate for the ordinary "kai-si" (common man). They brought me several species, when they knew I was collecting, one of which, with a bright red and yellow belly, measured over five feet in length, and was about as thick as one's wrist.

We visited one day a very fine waterfall in the neighbourhood, of which No. 7 is a photograph. It was formed by the waters of a small creek falling into the Wai-na-Buka, and contained very little water at the time I photographed it, as there had been no rain for several weeks, but I believe in the wet season it is a truly grand sight, for both the lower and upper falls are then united, and form a continuous sheet of water fully 150 feet high, the width, at the same time, being of course very considerably increased. The rock at the back of the lower fall was naturally hollowed out, and allowed one to pass behind the falling sheet of water without getting in the least wet.

No. 12.—Bungalow from the River Wai-na-Mala.

## Part II.—*The Wai-na-Mala.*

WE had been about a week at Na Soqo (pronounced Na Songo), when E. proposed a trip into the mountains, which I have before mentioned as forming a bold and picturesque outline to the north-west. It was about the middle of April, and consequently the beginning of the dry season, and as the weather had been glorious for several weeks and looked like lasting, we thought it advisable to take the opportunity and start as soon as possible.

The party was to consist of E., his wife (who naturally did not see the fun of being left behind by herself, and as she spoke the language like a native, proved herself invaluable), C., and myself; but there was a considerable amount of work to be done before starting, as E. assured us the fly-fishing further up the river was magnificent, and the duck shooting by no means to be despised. Unfortunately we had brought very few cartridges and no fishing tackle whatever with us, as some of our Australian friends who had visited Fiji assured us that neither shooting or fishing was to be had; we therefore were obliged to make the most of what E. had in stock, which consisted of one very old trout rod spliced in two places, a broken reel, some ordinary twine for a line, and two casting lines. We managed to buy some hooks at the small store at the junction of the Wai-na-Buka and Wai-na-Mala, which the storekeeper honestly told us

he could not guarantee, as it would never pay to sell good hooks to the natives, who would in that case never buy a sufficient quantity. We afterwards found out the truth of this statement to our intense disgust, for we several times lost heavy fish from the hook straightening out in their mouths when subjected to a heavy strain.

With the aid of some old pieces of gut we manufactured about twenty flies, an old Muscovy drake and several mongrel cocks being requisitioned for the feathers; however, rough as they were, they did good service, and were all made about the size of small salmon or large sea-trout flies, as E. assured us the fish would take nothing smaller. This surprised me a good deal at first, but I afterwards found that the only sort of flies on the river which the fish rose at were of the dragon-fly species, of which there was an immense variety, with bodies of a brilliant red, blue, green, yellow, and, in fact, every imaginable colour, so that we could not go far wrong in that respect, although we found that the red-bodied ones took, if anything, the best.

I may as well mention here the different kinds of fish which rise to a fly in the Fiji rivers. They are, as far as I know, three in number, and are, of course, all native species, nobody having as yet attempted to introduce trout, which would probably find the water too warm for them.

There is first the "Ika-droka," which appears to be far more numerous than any other kind; it is a beautifully silver-scaled fish, rather dark on the back, and ornamented with indistinct square markings of a dark colour on the sides, and is in shape somewhat like an English perch, being rather thick through the shoulders for its length. The head is large, with an enormous mouth, and it averages from half-a-pound to one pound in weight, although it is frequently caught up to three pounds. They do not give so much play as an English trout, although some of the larger ones are pretty lively, but

No. 13.—Na Koro Vatu, village on the Wai-na-Mala.

rise much more freely at a fly, and are excellent eating. The "Sakila" is a lovely little bright silver fish, seldom reaching above a quarter of a pound in weight, but is good eating, and most ravenous in taking the large flies (they won't look at small ones). Then there is the "Sanka," which is plentiful in some of the rivers, and grows to a very large size; it is a dull, brownish-coloured fish, with no particular markings, very much like a mackerel in shape, especially about the formation of the tail, and seems equally at home in salt and fresh water, for it is frequently caught round the coast on the inside of the reef.

We bought several pieces of shirting (and wretched stuff it was) at the store, to pay for any food or curios we might buy, and also to give away in presents, and I was taking the camera and several dozen dry plates, as I expected to get some interesting photographs of the scenery and natives where a camera had never been taken before.

As we intended going up the Wai-na-Mala as far as possible in canoes, and then walking up the stream for several days more, our kit was necessarily pretty heavy, as besides clothing, mosquito-nets, etc., we had to take cooking utensils and tinned meats, besides a Polynesian cook boy, who was a great character. He came from Santo, one of the Solomon Islands, and being quite a ladies' man, was very fond of the Fijian girls. They naturally returned the feeling, as he always had some tit-bits at his disposal, but they got him into many a scrape for gossiping instead of looking after his cooking. We also took an arm-chair slung on bamboos, for carrying E.'s wife across the river, which we expected to be obliged to ford a great many times after leaving the canoes.

All being ready, we started about 10 a.m. on the 21st of April, in three canoes, E., C., and myself occupying the first one on the chance of getting a shot at duck, the lady of the party following in the second, on which a "Tibi-Tibi" (reed) house had

been erected to protect her from the sun or rain, and the cook boy, Makala, with the kit, bringing up the rear in the third, two Fijians being told off on each canoe to pole or paddle.

The river, at this point, has an average breadth of about 40 yards in the dry season, but of course varies considerably, and narrows a good deal at some of the rapids, which occur every mile or so. An hour and a half's poling brought us to Na Koro Vatu (the town on the rock), where Ratu William, the Buli (chief) of the district, came down to the water to greet us, and have a "Sara-sara" (which means to look you over and examine everything you possess). He is a fine, well-built man, of over six feet in height, and has one of the finest houses in the country, built on a raised foundation of earth, supported by a double tier of "balla-balla" (tree fern) posts,—which are much esteemed for their durability,—and beautifully thatched with the large Makita leaves.

I afterwards took a photograph of it (No. 15), as also one of the town, showing the "rara" (an open space left in the centre of every village, No. 13), and one of himself, with his wife and daughter (No. 14).

It will be seen, on looking attentively, that both the Buli and his wife are minus one of their little fingers, the result of a curious custom, which necessitates the performance of this rite as a sign of intense grief. Thus, on the death of a near relation, the first joint of the finger is chopped off, the second joint is sacrificed on the next occasion, and so on through the family, so that if a man is unfortunate enough to have a large circle of dear friends, and lives to a good old age, his hands get fearfully mutilated before he finally goes to rest himself, and requires the rite to be performed on his own account. However, I cannot believe they are so sensitive to pain as a

No. 14.—Ratu William, Buli of Na Koro Vatu, and Family.

white man, judging from the free use they make of the split bamboo, which is as sharp as a razor; it is their remedy for everything, and whether they have a headache, rheumatism, or a boil, they slash the affected part to the bone without the slightest hesitation, which, as their flesh heals in a wonderfully rapid manner, does not inconvenience them for long. I once saw a labour boy pin his foot to the ground with a hoe, but beyond a slight exclamation of surprise more than of pain, it did not seem to trouble him much.

The fly-fishing was very soon verified, as, although we had no time to stop and fish the rapids properly, we caught over a dozen very respectable Ika-droka by trolling a fly behind the canoe, two beauties coming on at the same time in the last rapid, which caused us some anxiety about our tackle, for it was almost dark, and the men could not possibly stop poling in the middle of the rapid; we were therefore obliged to drag them after us until reaching some comparatively still water, when we managed to land them safely.

It was after dark when we arrived opposite the small town of Navucini, having made about 15 miles by water, and passed through nothing but extensive alluvial flats, stretching for miles on the right bank of the river. These are at present covered with "vico" (wild sugar cane) and reeds of different sorts, and, if it were not for the annual inundation, which submerges miles of it, would make splendid sugar land. The left bank was more hilly, with many picturesque villages scattered about; one especially, Nakamarusa, perched on a rather bare hill 250 feet shear above the water, looked very inaccessible.

I was at a loss at first to account for their reason for building the villages in such out-of-the-way places, and so far above the river on which they depend for their

water supply, but these positions were no doubt selected for the natural advantages they offered in case of an attack, and this was an important consideration some few years ago, when almost every man's hand was against his neighbour. Raids were constantly made on the villages to supply the ovens of some big chief who might be entertaining his friends. These attacks were always made at night, when all the women and children, and what men they could find asleep, were killed and carried off in triumph to contribute to the feast of the great man.

We landed as well as we could by the light of one small lantern, and groped our way along a narrow bush track for about half a mile before arriving at the town of Navucini, which is beautifully situated in a narrow gorge between two steep ranges of hills, the bluffs on the south side being particularly fine.

Our men immediately conducted us to the Buli's (chief's) house, where we had to submit to a close scrutiny by the natives, who flocked in from all parts of the town on hearing of our arrival. Every house in a Fijian town seems to be more or less public property, the people going in and out, or sleeping in it at will, and even the chief's house itself is no exception to the rule, only a small space at one end, raised about a foot above the general level of the floor, and covered with clean mats, being reserved for himself. His wife or wives do not, as a rule, live in the same house, but generally have a house of their own in another part of the town.

The lower part of the house was rapidly filled with squatting natives of both sexes, who discussed rather noisily our personal appearance, everything we had got on, and everything we had brought with us; it was my first introduction to the savage at home, and a strange and wild-looking lot they were, with the flickering blaze of a small wood fire partially lighting up their copper-coloured faces and naked bodies.

No. 15.—Ratu William's house at Na Koro Vatu.

We had been seated a very few minutes before a presentation of food was made to us by the Buli in the shape of a live fowl, with its legs tied, and a plaintain leaf full of boiled yams. This offering of food is a universal custom amongst the Fijians as a sign of welcome; it is never omitted, and, in the olden times, it would have been dangerous to remain in a town where the custom was not complied with, indicating, as it certainly would, that your room was more welcome than your company.

Our boy cooked the fish, and also a duck and a plover we had shot on the way, so, with the addition of the yams, we made a very good supper, the floor serving as a table, and our audience never taking their eyes off us for a moment; their curiosity seemed to be insatiable, for they never moved until we had put up our mosquito nets, and retired to bed behind a screen of mats we had improvised across the upper end of the house, and even then some old ladies, more curious than the rest, tried to watch C. and myself undressing, by looking round the corners of the mats.

The next morning we got away at about 9 a.m., after having a hurried breakfast, and making a return present of money and cloth to the old chief for the loan of his house.

It was a lovely day, so we took it very leisurely, stopping to take a few photographs of the scenery, and fishing some of the most likely looking streams. Nai Ruku Ruku, a large village on the left bank, was passed about mid-day, and the native minister (ordained by the Wesleyan Church), Taito, and his wife, came down to greet us, and made us promise to stay there on our return journey. We were obliged to hurry up a bit towards evening, in order to reach Na Koro Souli (the town of the young cocoa-nuts), where we intended staying the night.

We had only travelled about another 15 miles, but our fishing had been very

successful, for we managed to get a good dish of fish for tiffin, and another for supper in the evening; unfortunately we had no scales, so could only guess at the weight, which must have been considerable. Only two brace of ducks were bagged, although plenty were seen, owing to the difficulty of getting on to them quickly enough when poling up stream.

Na Koro Souli, where we arrived just before nightfall, is a very large town, situated on the high left bank, and presents a most charming appearance from the river (which spreads out to at least 80 yards in width at this point), being backed by a range of low hills covered with cocoa-nut palms, tree ferns, and bananas.

This is one of the principal places on the river where the manufacture of canoes is carried on; quite a score, in different stages of completion, were lying along the beach (No. 16), most of them covered with a light framework of sticks and banana leaves to protect them from the sun and rain during the hollowing-out operations. They are not built, but are simply cut out of the solid stem of some very straight and suitable tree, and the ends are then pointed and flattened on the top for the men poling to stand upon, and the bottom is left perfectly round. Four or five young saplings are lashed horizontally across the top of the canoe, extending over one side to about four feet, and along the ends of these, and parallel with the canoe, is fastened a long and very buoyant piece of wood, about six inches in diameter, which forms the "cama" or outrigger, and prevents the canoe from capsizing. Some of them are very large, and will carry fully two tons of yams piled up on a platform of bamboos, extending partly over the "cama." I have myself seen as many as 35 natives on one canoe, but the edge looked dangerously near the water.

Their sea canoes, in which they travel for hundreds of miles, are made on

No 16.—Beach at na Koro Souli, Wai-na-Mala.

exactly the same principle, but have high bulwarks fitted on afterwards, and enormous triangular mat sails. They travel with the most astonishing rapidity, and it is most amusing to watch them in a stiff breeze; several men will then go and sit on the "cama," which, on account of the healing over of the canoe, is six or eight feet out of the water, and if a sudden lull in the wind comes, which often happens, they are, of course, all thrown off into the water as the canoe rights itself, but as they are like ducks, they soon regain their former position amidst the yelling and shouts of laughter of their companions.

The Turaga na Koro's (head man of the village) house, where we installed ourselves, was the finest we had as yet seen; it was about 60 feet long by 30 feet broad, and was beautifully finished on the inside with sinnet (native-made cord from cocoa-nut fibre), dyed red and black, and woven into some very pretty designs on the reed walls; the floor was also covered with a layer of clean mats, over a thick bed of dried grass, and made a delightful and soft lounge.

Here we got a supply of fresh young cocoa-nuts, in good condition for drinking, and a most delicious beverage it is. Enveloped in its thick coating of husk it is always cool in the hottest weather, and its sweet, sub-acid taste is most refreshing, but I must confess that it is decidedly improved by the addition of a little whiskey (just to correct the acidity), and is then really a drink for the gods! E. first suggested the mixture, and it was some time before I would consent to the adulteration, but having once tried it I became a convert at once, as he assured me I should do.

We got away the next morning soon after daybreak, as we were anxious to reach Na Salia, a town about 20 miles further up, before night, and as the river became narrower and the rapids more powerful, our progress was naturally much slower. We

passed the Wai-y-Somo, a tributary of the Wai-na-Mala on the left bank, at 11·30 a.m., and stopped for tiffin about a mile further up, having caught half-a-dozen good Ika-droka by trolling, and bagged three duck, and whilst the kettle was boiling we indulged in our first swim in the river, as our Fijians assured us we were now out of the region of the sharks, which infest all the lower parts of the Wai-na-Mala and Rewa, and make them quite unsafe for bathing, except in the shallow parts.

I have never been fortunate enough to see one myself, but the natives declare they are in every respect similar to the salt water shark, which exist in such numbers round the coast, and as they are a very observant people, and all make the same statement without exception, they are probably right. It struck me at the time as being very curious to find a salt water species so far up a fresh water river (60 or 70 miles at least from the sea), more especially as the latter is full of rapids, and some of them very shallow, which of course it would have to ascend, but I believe it is not an exceptional case. Two or three natives generally fall victims to them during the year, but of course this represents a very small per-centage of the thousands who bathe every day; nevertheless it is a very great drawback having such brutes in the river, as a good swim is such a luxury in a tropical climate, and although it is a thousand to one you are not touched, still there is just the chance, which makes it scarcely worth the risk. My brother E. has often had a "pot" at them with a rifle while swimming close to the surface through the large pool immediately below the bungalow (No. 12), but has never been lucky enough to bag one; they must, however, be enormous brutes, to judge from the bite a boy received on the leg a few months before I arrived, which extended from the knee right up to the thigh, the flesh being completely torn away from the bone. He was brought up to E.'s bungalow, who luckily had a doctor staying with him at the time, and, although given

No. 17.—Mode of travelling, village of Na Vuni Assie, Wai-na-Mala.

up by the latter as hopeless, such is the healing power of their flesh that he rapidly recovered on a treatment of Brand's beef tea and other stimulants. The most amusing part of it was, to show his gratitude for being cured, and kept for many weeks, together with his father and mother, who came to nurse him, he was caught going off with a sack over his shoulder filled with soap, candles, food, and, in fact, everything he could lay his hands on. Such is the gratitude of a Fijian! I am sorry to say he doesn't know the meaning of the word. He seems to consider it quite legitimate to steal anything he can when he comes to your house, but, curiously enough, if you are accepting his hospitality, nothing would induce him to touch a thing, and we often left our effects strewed about their houses without missing a single article. He is however a wonderfully good-tempered fellow, and rarely seems to bear malice; you may bully and swear at a Fijian as much as you like, but a few hours afterwards he will come back all smiles, so that it is impossible to be angry with him for long. He has some good points about him after all.

But to return to our tiffin. After discussing the fish and ducks, and having a short smoke, we again embarked and passed through some lovely country during the rest of the afternoon. We were now getting well into the mountains, and the hills were ever increasing in height and approaching nearer to the banks of the river as we went on. The tree ferns were especially fine, in some places completely covering the sides of the hills, but unfortunately many of them were almost invisible, owing to the ubiquitous convolvulus with its enormous mauve, pink, and white blossoms, and other creepers and lianas, which had insidiously smothered them with their beautiful but fatal drapery. Not a break was visible in the dense mass of vegetation, with the exception of a small bare patch of red earth here and there, high up on the hill side, where some native more

industrious than his fellows had planted his few yams; patches of bamboo, with its beautiful light green feathery foliage, and an occasional "dawa" tree, whose young leaves are of a brilliant scarlet, somewhat relieved the monotony of the dark green tropical verdure, while every now and then a grand old "baka" (Fijian banyan), "ivi" (a sort of chesnut), or shaddock tree, with its large golden fruit and sweet-scented blossoms, towered far above its neighbours, and made up a picture which for richness of vegetation would be difficult to surpass.

We passed a very prettily situated village on a huge rock covered with ferns, called Na Vuni Assie (the root of the Assie tree), of which I took a photograph (No. 17) while C. was trying a fine rapid a little way above, from which he took three good Ika-droka. It was some time after dark when we arrived at Na Salia, and the last part of the journey was anything but pleasant, for what with the absence of any moon and the increasing power of the rapids, we were more than once nearly swamped; however, we reached the landing-place in safety at last, and by the aid of our two small lanterns scrambled up a steep slippery hill and over a high embankment or dike by means of a sort of hen ladder (a tree with notches cut in it for steps) into the town, which stood on some rather high ground overhanging the river on the right bank.

The next day being Sunday, we were obliged to remain where we were, for it is impossible to get a Fijian to do anything on that day for love or money, so great is the influence of the Wesleyan mission. No doubt he submits the more readily to this strict observance of Sunday ("siga tabu," forbidden day, as he calls it), because it exactly suits his disposition; he is a thoroughly lazy fellow, and the height of his enjoyment is to lie at full length all day long before a fire, and smoke "selukas" (a sort of cheroot, made by rolling their native-cured tobacco in a strip of dried banana leaf). He

No. 18.—Na Salia, village on the Wai-na-Mala.

consequently makes it an excuse for doing absolutely nothing, and told us he was even forbidden to bring water from the river to drink; the work, therefore, all devolved on our poor Polynesian cook-boy, who, fortunately for us, was not a Christian.

The missionaries have certainly wrought a wonderful change in the country, for not many years ago these same natives were eating one another, who now go several times to church on Sunday, where native teachers officiate. Nevertheless, I am afraid many of them are Christians in name rather than spirit, for not many months ago a Government officer, who was collecting the taxes was reported to have been eaten on this very island, and the Kai Colos (mountain men) probably still indulge on the sly in "bokolo" (cooked human flesh), of which they were so passionately fond. As in every other part of the world, the Christianised savage is always more ready to swindle and cheat than his heathen brother, and we often found the truth of this when some native teacher would try and prevent the people selling us "curios," telling them they were worth double their real value.

Not being able to continue our journey, I took a photograph of the town in the morning (No. 18), and we then went for a stroll in the bush to see what we could get in the way of birds, &c., but as no Fijian would accompany us, our efforts were not very successful. We were obliged to keep to one or two narrow tracks, the bush itself being much too thick to admit of a passage, and although we heard many different "calls," our unpractised eyes were unable to discover the birds in the thick foliage. Two pigeons and a bat completed our bag; the former was the ordinary fruit pigeon (*Carpophaga pacifica*), the species most common in Fiji; the face, neck, and head are a very light blue grey, becoming much darker along the back and tail coverts, while the breast, belly, and tail are reddish brown, and the eyes a bright claret red; they are excellent eating,

and are very numerous in the more undisturbed parts of the island, and can be easily recognised by their deep hoarse bark.

The bat was of the species commonly called the "flying fox" (*Pteropus*), and is esteemed such a delicacy by the natives, that we had it fried in its own fat for supper and found it really excellent eating. These bats congregate in enormous numbers in certain localities. I have often seen several trees together with thousands of these animals crowded together, their young ones clinging on beneath them, along every available branch, from which every leaf had been stript, presumably by their claws. Here they sleep all day long in the broiling sun, and gradually fly off one by one in the evening, in search of the wild fruits they feed on. It is a very curious sight, and I could scarcely believe they were really animals the first time I saw them, but on firing off my gun a transformation rapidly took place, and the air became quite darkened by the enormous number of them, flapping and screaming round the trees.

I was anxious to make a collection of Fijian birds (having already made a considerable one in Australia), and for this purpose took out one of Cogswell and Harrison's walking-stick guns, which I found a wonderfully useful little weapon. With the stock fitted on, and with dust shot cartridges, I constantly shot parrots, quail, snipe, and other birds on the wing, and found that up to 20 yards it was quite reliable, while in several instances it killed up to 35 yards.

This gun astonished the natives more than anything we had with us, for they could not understand the fire coming out of a walking stick. Of course I never let them see me put a cartridge in, but used to walk about amongst them using it as a walking stick, and would then suddenly fire at a passing bird, when they would slap their thighs, yell, and bolt into their houses like rabbits. They were immensely pleased

No. 19.—Fijian men from the Wai-na-Buka.

at the idea of the birds thinking it only a walking stick, which I assured them was the case, and one grey-headed old cannibal smiled and remarked, "What a splendid weapon it would have been in the good old times, enabling one to go up and shoot an enemy in the back without him suspecting anything!" This would have been thought a smart thing in those days, as they never thought of attacking a man in front if they could possibly kill him from behind. The fame of this little gun travelled far in advance of us, and the first request on entering a village was always to "sara-sara" (have a look at) the fire-stick.

After supper, as is the usual custom, the native teacher of the town came and asked us if he might hold prayers in our house before retiring to rest. This of course we agreed to, and the place was soon filled with a black congregation, when, to our utter astonishment, the missionary began to give us a lecture on the iniquity of shooting on "siga tabu"; he said he was sorry for us, as we evidently knew no better, and prayed that we might become Christians, and see the error of our ways. E.'s wife translated it to me as he went on, and I could not help being amused at his impertinence, although I must say we all felt rather small at being "hauled over the coals" by a gentleman who was no doubt a cannibal a few years ago.

The next morning we were under way at 7 o'clock. The character of the river had altered entirely since its last junction with the Wai-y-Somo, for, although differing little in width, it consisted principally of long, still, deep pools (some of them fully a quarter of a mile long), connected by very steep and powerful rapids, instead of the comparatively uniform depth, moderate streams, and occasional pools met with in the lower reaches of the river.

We had hired six more men at Na Salia to help to carry our baggage on leaving

the canoes, as we did not expect to get many miles further, although we were determined to push on as far as possible before taking to the land. As it turned out we only succeeded in getting about another five miles, and at 11 a.m. beached our canoes opposite the deserted village of Moi Tavua, where a small tributary called the Wai Loa (black water) flowed into the Wai-na-Mala on the left bank. The rapids in the last few miles had been getting very powerful and boisterous, the incline in some of them being so great as to prevent one seeing anything beyond the top when seated in the canoe at the bottom. How the natives managed to pole up them was more than I could understand, as unless the bows of the canoe are kept perfectly straight, it is rapidly turned broadside on by the force of the water, and swamping is the inevitable result. As it was we never reached the top of one without the canoe getting half full of water.

After hiding the paddles and promising a man, who lived in a neighbouring village, a present if he would look after the canoes, the baggage was made up into convenient packages and slung on bamboos, which were carried between two men. I took a photograph of the procession before starting, which unfortunately got broken. After walking for two hours and fording the river twice, we stopped for tiffin under a magnificent shaddock tree, which formed a delightful shade, and was loaded with ripe fruit, looking much more tempting than it tastes. It is curious that although the tree flourishes wonderfully, often attaining a very large size, and bearing prolifically, the fruit is as a rule insipid and dry; many people say it is owing to the tree being too young, and that it requires at least a hundred years or more for the fruit to reach perfection, but how far this is true I am unable to say.

Another three hours' walk and four more crossings of the river brought us to Vuni Dakua (the root of the Dakua tree), where we intended to stay for the night.

NEGATIVE UNFORTUNATELY BROKEN.

No. 20.—Vuni Dakua, village on the Upper Wai-na-Mala.

The walking during the day had been anything but pleasant, as we were obliged to keep along the loose and rough shingle at the side of the river, and which formed the bed of the river itself in the rainy season. This stretch of shingle was of course left on alternate sides of the river, according to the turns the latter took, and at every bend the river had to be crossed, for it was quite impossible to make a way through the bush. We were now thankful we had brought the chair, as most of the crossings took us considerably above the waist, and would have been quite impracticable for a lady without it; four of the strongest men carried it on their shoulders, which was high enough as a rule, although several times they had to hold it far above their heads to prevent her feet touching the water, and had great difficulty in keeping their balance with a strong stream surging past them, almost up to their armpits. She often looked in rather a precarious situation, but was wonderfully plucky over it, and never once lost her nerve.

We had no time to stop and fish the streams, promising ourselves a full investigation of them on our return journey, and as ducks were both scarce and shy, we only bagged a couple after a considerable amount of stalking.

Vuni Dakua is a small village of perhaps a dozen houses, situated on a peninsular, formed by the river making a complete horse-shoe bend; it had evidently been a stronghold in the fighting days, and was completely surrounded by a double dike or embankment of earth, between which was a deep moat. It was the first fortified village I had seen, but I afterwards saw many very strongly intrenched, and which must have offered considerable resistance to men only armed with clubs.

In the centre of the village stood a fine "Wi" tree (pronounced "wee"), a sort of Fijian mango, loaded with the almost ripe fruit. In shape and size it is very much like the Indian mango, its colour also being a dirty greenish-yellow; it has a pleasant

sub-acid taste, and is tolerably juicy, but has no stone, and is not so stringy as the mango. When cooked they make an excellent substitute for apples, and indeed cannot easily be distinguished from them when done up with cloves and pastry.

The turaga na Koro's house was again placed at our disposal, and a very small and dirty one it was, and as it soon became cram full of men and women smoking hard, the atmosphere was not of the sweetest; in fact, it got so bad at last that we were obliged to request them to retire, which they very civilly did, after expressing their astonishment at our objecting to it.

After our supper, E., in an unlucky moment, asked our men to give us a "méké," a native dance and song, for the benefit of C. and myself, who had never seen one. This they readily agreed to do, but, unfortunately, when once fairly started, seemed to have no idea of leaving off, and kept us awake with it till the early hours of the morning. It is a very monotonous performance, and a little of it goes a very long way. Several men or women stand close together and form the band, one holding a thick bamboo, which another hits with two sticks to beat the time, and the others doing the singing part of the business, while all the rest form a ring round them, and move slowly or quickly according to the beating of the bamboo, going through the most extraordinary contortions with their bodies, which however they all do in exactly the same time and in the same manner; the dancers clap their hands continually, and sometimes take part in the singing also, which is more curious than melodious. One man in the centre starts off with a long recitative on a single note, after which all the others join in at different intervals with a kind of seconds and bass, and sing a sort of sea-sawing chant for several minutes. It appeared to me that the principal object was to keep it up as long as possible without drawing breath, and on them all getting thoroughly exhausted to finish together

No. 21.—Fijian women from the Wai-na-buka.

on the same long sustained note with a final gasp. The bamboo man then plays a symphony on his own account, and the principal performer, having recovered his breath, starts off again as before. This goes on without any variation for hours together, and reminds one very forcibly of the everlasting reel at a barn dance in the Highlands of Scotland.

Of course the above description only refers to an ordinary "méké" got up for their own amusement at the time, and is a very different thing to the dances performed at the missionary meetings and on other special occasions, as I shall describe further on.

The next morning was again beautifully fine, so I took a photograph of the village before starting (No. 20), in which one or two children will be seen sitting astride on either the left or right hip of their mothers, which is the way they are always carried, the reason being that the youngsters can thus help themselves to their natural nourishment whenever they feel inclined; it makes the woman lean forward in the most curious way, and gives them a natural Grecian bend, which would have been envied by many ladies a few years ago.

The children are subject to some horrible diseases when young, one of the worst being called "zoeki," which nearly every child has before it is many years old. It takes the form of white ulcerated sores on the body, but especially round the mouth and eyes, and these of course attract the flies in thousands. They never attempt to brush them off, and consequently present a most sickening sight, the poor little things appearing to be almost eaten up with them; but the worst of it is, although not catching amongst themselves, it has the most horrible effect if a European gets inoculated by it, taking years, if ever it gets out of his system. We were therefore very careful in covering up any scratch or abrasion of the skin, as a fly off one of the children might easily do the

mischief, and we were also most careful in taking our own mats to sleep on, as one never knew where the children might have been.

The small bamboo palisade in the background of the photograph is a pig fence, and is erected round all the villages in the interior to keep out the half-wild pigs, which have increased enormously since Captain Cook first put them on the islands. In some parts they are quite wild, and afford pretty good sport when hunted with dogs, but it is rough work, and they are not fit to eat when killed, although the natives are very fond of them. The pigs about the villages are, on the contrary, only too tame, and if it was not for the fences there would be no keeping them out of the houses, as of course they are capital scavengers, and are always on the look out for something to eat.

We had heard a strange beating noise in one of the houses nearly all night long, and as it still continued in the morning I went in to see what was causing it, and found several girls busy making "tappa," or native cloth. It is called by the Fijians "masi," and is made from the inner bark of a species of mulberry tree. The bark is taken off in long strips and conveyed to the nearest stream, where, with the aid of water, the coarse outer bark is separated from the inner white layer by scraping with a sharp shell. It is then laid on a large wooden block and beaten out with a curiously grooved mallet (No. I) into a uniform thin layer, which accounted for the noise we had heard. It can be made of any thickness by beating several of the thin layers together, and is then very tough, and of a creamy white colour. This thick material is often printed in most elaborate and ingenious designs with black, red, and brown vegetable dyes, five different patterns being shown in Photo. No. 5. The pattern itself is either made with thin strips of bamboo on a curved block of wood, which is moistened with the dye and stamped on the cloth, or a rough sort of stencil-plating is made use of, the pattern

No. 22.—View on the Upper Wai-na-Mala.

being cut in a banana leaf, which is laid on the cloth and brushed over with the dye. When beaten very thin it is very light and gauze-like, and I have even seen very becoming ball-dresses made from it.

We only intended to walk about ten miles this day, to a town called Wai-basaga (the meeting of the waters), so stopped to fish a good many of the rapids, and had some excellent sport. E. took four beauties out of a small rapid in as many minutes, and by tiffin time we had more than we could eat, our men coming in for a good share of them. It seemed to be quite immaterial what kind of fly one used when they were well on the rise, for they would jump over the line in dozens in their eagerness to get at it. The only flies we saw on the river were the large dragon flies mentioned before.

The path now for the first time diverged slightly from the course of the river, and led for about half a mile through a flat of wild sugar cane reaching far above our heads, interspersed with patches of bush of moderate growth, and numerous wild lemon trees loaded with ripe fruit. On clearing this we ascended a very steep hill, from the summit of which a most beautiful and extensive view suddenly opened out before us. Stretching away for miles beneath us was a fine undulating country, about which were scattered the "yam" and "dalo" (taro) gardens of the natives, whose thatched houses could be seen peeping out of the bush in every direction. The hills rose one above the other on all sides, with their variegated green covering beautifully lighted up by an almost vertical sun, while a splendid bare rocky bluff stood out in bold relief in the far distance. About a mile from us lay the town of Wai-basaga, snugly situated in the delta formed by the junction of the Wai-na-Mala, which takes a sharp bend to the left, and its largest tributary, the Wai Loa (black water), which continues in the same direction as the main river below its junction. A fine large patch of bananas, immediately below us, made a

good foreground to the picture, of which I was not long in securing a photograph (No. 22), which, however, gives a very poor idea of the reality.

Half an hour's stiff walk, after a very steep descent of the hill, brought us to the bank of the river opposite the town, which we crossed for the tenth time that day.

As usual, we took up our abode in the largest and best house in the town, which belonged to the Buli of a large district, and, after seeing our luggage safely packed away, and the lady of the party busy preparing dinner, E., C., and myself started off for the river again for a bathe, asking the chief if he could show us a good place. He smiled mysteriously, and led the way to a dark and deep pool a little way up the tributary stream and surrounded by high rocks, evidently thinking we should be frightened to go in, for a Fijian has a thorough contempt for what a "kai papalagi" (foreigner) can do in the way of physical exercise. I must confess it was rather a nasty-looking place, and at any other time should have thought twice about going in, but as a small crowd had now collected to see the performance, we could not shirk it, and, utilising a large tree that had become fixed at the side of the pool as a spring board, we all three dived in at once, much to the astonishment of the natives, for, although they are like ducks in the water themselves, they never by any chance go in head first, and cannot understand anyone else doing so. I could not help laughing at the exclamations of delight and admiration they made about E. when he was stripped, as he is decidedly inclined towards stoutness, and they were thinking what a glorious addition he would have made to the dinner-table in the good old days of cannibalism. The ladies, especially, were always very curious to see us bathe, and insisted upon following us in our morning and evening ablutions, some of them looking on openly, whilst others could be seen peering from behind the bushes in the immediate neighbourhood.

No. 23.—Buli's house and "rara" at Wai-Basaga.

Our men indulged in another méké at night, and were lighted up by a lot of old women belonging to the town holding flaring bamboo torches, which made the scene look very weird and savage.

We were just preparing to set off the next morning after an early breakfast, intending to have a good day's fishing, when one of our men informed us that the Buli was preparing a feast for us, much to our annoyance, as we could not refuse to accept it without giving mortal offence, and it meant a delay of at least an hour or more. There was nothing for it but to sit down patiently and wait, and sure enough in a few minutes a bundle of banana leaves, tied up with sinnet, made its appearance, which, on being cut open, proved to be a young pig boiled whole, two boiled chickens and a pile of roast yams and taro following on. The pig certainly looked very tempting, but as they are the general scavengers of the town, and are not very particular what they eat, we could not bring ourselves to taste it; our men, however, had no such scruples, and soon made short work of it, using their fingers. We contented ourselves with the fowls, which were really excellent. They have a way of boiling them wrapped up in the large leaves of a plant, which makes them beautifully tender, and in fact they fall to pieces at the slightest touch. They also served us up some "boro indeena" (Fiji cabbage), which, when cooked, looks and tastes very much like spinach. It is, when growing, a small shrub, with long pointed leaves, and bears a small black berry, which is also very good eating. This vegetable used to be kept exclusively for eating with "bokolo" (human flesh), to which, I believe, it imparted a delicious flavour. The cannibal forks, shown in No. 1, were also expressly used for eating this last delicacy, and were never disgraced by touching any less aristocratic food.

Having stayed so long, I took a photograph of the town before we left (No. 23). It

represents the Buli's house where we slept, and the "rara," or open square, which is found in every Fijian village, and is used for assemblies, dances, etc. The Buli himself may be seen on the right, dressed in tappa and holding one of our guns in his hand; the row of men at the back are our canoe-men, who have managed to find some rusty old muskets somewhere in the town, and in the background is seen the prominent bluff of which I have before spoken.

We got away at last, and the old Buli insisted on accompanying us on our day's march, and begged very hard to be allowed to carry one of our guns, with which he stalked along ahead as proud as "Punch." We were much annoyed at his coming, as he was a fearfully greedy fellow, and asked, in turn, for everything we were possessed of; however, in this he was only following up an acknowledged custom of the country, and we were guilty of a gross breach of etiquette in refusing his requests. It is a very curious custom, called "keri-keri," and enables one man to go and demand anything he takes a fancy to from another man (especially a relation), which the latter cannot refuse to part with, but, as the donor has the right to demand something in return, it prevents the custom from becoming very often resorted to. For instance, if a man earns a few shillings, and his relations get to know of it, they immediately go and "keri-keri" the whole of it; he cannot refuse to give it them, and as they probably have nothing worth "keri-kerying" in return, he is the sole loser by the transaction, and therefore generally keeps his earnings secret.

They will sometimes carry it so far as to accept a dose of medicine rather than nothing, and I remember E.'s wife being dreadfully "sold" once in this way. A big chief from down the river came to see us one day at Na Soqo, and while lounging on the verandah exercised his privilege of "keri-kerying" everything he could think of.

No. 24.—Fijian boys from the Wai-na-Buka.

He first commenced with the spoons and forks, and gradually descended in the scale through knives, glasses, jugs, tins of meat, etc., until, finding the hostess turn a deaf ear to all his demands, he at last, in desperation, asked for some "wai na mati" (medicine). Thinking to get rid of him once and for ever, she gave him a strong dose of "Turkey rhubarb," but he completely upset all our calculations by smacking his lips, and declaring it was the finest grog he had ever tasted. The fact is, the native grog, of which I shall speak further on, has a decided taste of rhubarb, and he evidently thought he had got an over-proof sample. It is needless to say she never tried the experiment on another native.

We crossed the river again immediately after leaving Wai-basaga, and in half an hour arrived at a small village which we were anxious to pass round without stopping at, but it was "no go." The head man came to meet us, and insisted upon us going to his house, where we found the usual present of a fowl and some yams awaiting us. Of course we had to give double the amount in return, so that we were really better off without their offerings.

We found it a great nuisance being obliged to stop at every small village we passed through, as it impeded our progress considerably, but as the natives always know beforehand that you are coming, and prepare a present for you, it is difficult to help conforming to the custom without giving offence, which we did not like to do. The fact is, a Fijian can't understand any one being in a hurry; he has no idea of time, one day being as good as another to him, and thinks the "kai papalagi" must be mad to rush about in the way they do. They have a word, "malua," which means "by-and-by, and is more used than any word in the Fijian language, for it suits their disposition exactly—and they always thoroughly act up to it.

Immediately below the village was a beautiful rapid, leading into a deep pool, a very likely-looking place for Ika-droka, so, before going any further, I took the rod to have a try, and the very first cast landed a nice fish, which was soon followed by three more. I then crossed the river to try the other side of the rapid, as it was too broad to fish entirely from the one side, and after a few casts rose a beauty, which, after twice rising short, got well hooked on the tail fly, giving some very pretty play for a few minutes, before I managed to slide him on to the shelving shore, not having a landing-net with me. He weighed at least two pounds, and had disturbed the pool too much for any more to be got out of it, so we therefore continued quietly up the stream, C. now taking the rod, and landing another couple of brace before we stopped for tiffin.

Here another difficulty arose with the old chief, who would not touch the fowls we had brought with us from his village, it being a matter of strict etiquette with a Fijian not to partake of any food he has once given away; he had, therefore, to make his dinner off yams, as we were not going to open a tin of meat for his especial benefit. Our canoe-men always profited by this custom, for whatever was given us at the different villages they were obliged to consume all by themselves, the villagers not being allowed to help them with it; in this way six or seven men had often to eat a whole pig, together with enormous piles of yams and taro, but they were always equal to the occasion, and were sometimes completely gorged, for it is marvellous the quantity they can put away, and they would sooner burst than leave any.

After a good rest we continued up the bed of the river, which was getting much more confined, and was filled with huge granite boulders, both red and grey, some of them as large as a small house, and of excellent quality. It will doubtless be valuable

No. 25.—Fijian girls from the Wai-na-Mala.

at some future time for building purposes, and, with a decent road, could easily be transported to Suva.

Ascending a very steep but not very high hill, we came in sight of our destination, Roko-Roko-y-awa (Roko-Roko, a long way off), a large town situated on the left bank of the river, about two miles distant, in the centre of a small plain completely surrounded with hills from 3,000 to 4,000 feet high, forming a perfect amphitheatre. We descended, or rather scrambled, down the other side of the hill (for steps had been cut in the soap-stone to assist one in getting up and down), and, after a sharp walk of about half an hour through the finest "yaqona" (Fiji grog) and "dalo" (taro) gardens I had as yet seen, arrived in the town just as it was getting dark. The "dalo" planted here was the black-stemmed variety, and requires to be grown in water several inches deep. For this purpose a most elaborate system of irrigation had been carried out, the water trickling from one small patch into the one below throughout the valley, like the rice fields of Java and Ceylon. The root, which forms a tuber of sometimes 8 and 10 lbs. in weight, is the part eaten, and, when boiled, has a curious soapy consistency, and mottled grey colour; it is, however, good eating, and very nourishing, though not esteemed by the natives as much as the yam, and looks most picturesque when growing, with its enormous leaves, in some varieties several feet long.

There was another Buli here, who was the chief of a large mountain district, but as he was not at home we took possession of his house without asking, and immediately sent a man to inform him of our arrival.

He returned in the course of an hour or so, and as he was an old acquaintance of E.'s, having been down the river as far as Na Soqo, welcomed us heartily, but was awfully astonished to see E.'s wife, who was the first white woman that had ever been

anything like so far into the interior. He was loud in his praises of her pluck, and said she must be very "kaukaua" (strong and active) to walk so far; and indeed it was a very trying journey for a lady, over such a rough country without roads, and under a tropical sun.

The Buli's house was a splendid specimen of the old Fijian "Tevoro bourri" (devil house), and was by far the finest we had yet seen. It was built in a circular form, upon a foundation wall some ten feet high, composed of large round stones, and the low entrance door, to get through which you had to bend double, was reached by a long tree with notches cut in it like a hen ladder. The inside walls were artistically finished off with patterns worked in sinnet of different colours, and the roof was brought to a point and supported by bamboo rafters, which, partly from age and partly from the continual smoking from the wood fires, shone like polished ebony. No doubt this old "bourri" had seen many cannibal orgies, for it was here the old chief used to entertain his guests with poor wretches who had been clubbed for the occasion. Their method of choosing the victims was very curious. The chief would call a general assembly in his house, of all the people of the town, and after placing two men at either side of the door with clubs, would make all the inhabitants file out one by one. The executioners kept their eyes fixed on the chief, and at a sign from him knocked down the unlucky wretch who happened to be passing through at the time. Young girls were generally preferred, as they were not valued so much as the men, and were probably more tender eating.

The old chief evidently did not esteem the fair sex much, as he would not permit a woman to come into his house, and indeed only allowed the "turagas" (gentlemen) of the town to enter. He was a thorough gentleman in his way, and had great consideration

No 26.—Girls dressed in "tappa" (native cloth).

for us, for he turned everybody out when we went to bed, sleeping himself in one of the far-off corners; besides, he never asked for a single thing we had got, and proved himself an unique example in this respect,

Six o'clock the next morning saw us up and out, as we intended having another try for specimens in the bush, the old Buli himself offering to be our guide. Every native we asked said there were plenty of birds on the surrounding hills, so we expected some good sport, but after a tramp of over two hours up and down several very steep hills, under a baking sun, we never even fired a shot. Finding this rather monotonous, E. and myself loitered behind, admiring the wonderful variety of ferns, lycopods, orchids, and creepers of all sorts—for the vegetation was magnificent—while C. pushed on with the Buli, who, all this time, had been going like a steam-engine. They waited for us at the top of a hill, and on our coming up with them the Buli suggested, in a tone of great contempt, that as E. and myself were evidently old men, and could not walk (this was because we had loitered behind), we had better return to the town, and sit down in the house, and he would go on with C. and show him a place where pigeons and other birds abounded. The fact was the old man was evidently very much disappointed and angry at not being able to show us any birds, and was anxious to retrieve his luck.

We readily agreed to his proposition, as there appeared to be no chance of getting any specimens, but, as from where we stood a beautiful panorama of the country was spread out before us, we, instead of going back, sent a man for the camera, telling him to bring up the whisky-flask at the same time.

We sat down to admire the view while awaiting his return, and were thinking what a fine coffee country it would make, and which no doubt it will develop into at some future time. The town was about 800 feet below us, according to an aneroid I

carried with me, and looked like a collection of bee-hives nestled among the tall reeds which covered the small valley, and through which the river wound like a thin silver streak.

In a short time we caught sight of the man returning, and it then suddenly struck us that no water was within reach wherewith to dilute the whisky. How disconsolate we felt! But imagine our surprise when the native arrived with three small reeds full of water, and a broad grin on his face. Who will say that the savage is not an intelligent and thoughtful being after this? He had evidently anticipated our difficulty.

After taking two very good photographs, getting a fine bank of "balla-balla" (tree ferns) in the foreground, we leisurely strolled down to the town, where we found C. lying, completely done up, in the Buli's house. It appeared the old fellow had led him a fearful dance, up hill and down dale, without a moment's rest, and without a solitary bird to show for it, so that E. and myself had decidedly the best of the bargain after all.

In the afternoon I photographed the town and the Buli's house, but had the greatest difficulty in getting the old chief to sit, for of course he had never seen a camera before, and was convinced I intended working some spell upon him; in fact he told one of his men that he was frightened of dying after the operation. I induced him to submit to the ordeal at last, but he would on no account allow his wife and child to be taken. I afterwards persuaded him to put his head under the cloth, when his delight was unbounded at seeing everyone walking about on the focussing screen; I thought I should never get his head out again, for he kept on shouting "Sombo!" "Sombo!" (a favourite exclamation of surprise) from beneath it, and telling the people to walk about in front. Of course he was awfully puzzled at everything being upside down, and wanted

No. 27.—Girls in native dress and ornaments.

me to explain the reason, but I scarcely knew the language sufficiently to enter into a scientific explanation about lenses, etc.

There was rather an amusing incident in connection with this photograph, which made us laugh a good deal afterwards. I mentioned before, that in every village of any size, a native teacher is appointed by the Wesleyan mission to teach the children, and pray for the people generally, but as there are no set prayers in the Wesleyan service, it being all extempore, they are obliged to say what first comes into their heads, and as a rule they talk the greatest nonsense it is possible to conceive. In the present instance the teacher was very anxious to be photographed, but unfortunately arrived on the scene just as everything was over. In the evening prayer, before a large audience (I suppose for the want of something better to say), he gave them a full description of how it happened, explaining to them how he had hurried into the town on hearing that a photograph was to be taken, how he had dressed up in his best "masi" (native cloth) on purpose, and how he had arrived just too late, winding up by saying it was no doubt the will of God, and that therefore he must submit to it, etc.

We had some fishing in the evening in the pools near the village, but unfortunately lost one of our two casting lines, which got fast at the bottom of a rapid. We were unwilling to lose it without an effort, and offered a shilling to any boy who could recover it. A dozen little fellows, none of them more than six or seven years old, at once volunteered, and it was the funniest sight possible to see them dive in at the top of the rapid, and search every stone on the way down, fighting together under the water, and bobbing up in the pool at the bottom like so many corks. They would then run up the bank, and go in again at the top, but although they did it repeatedly, they never found our casting line.

A sumptuous dinner awaited us on our return, consisting of boiled eels, fowls, a fine pig, abundance of yams and taro, and a Fijian pudding; the latter was made of bananas, grated cocoa-nut, sugar-cane juice, and various other ingredients, and was really very palatable. After dinner we were treated to a "yaqona" (pronounced yangona), méké, which I was very anxious to hear.

The "yaqona na Viti," or Fiji grog, is a shrub which grows from four feet to five feet in height, with thick knotted stems branching out from the root, and covered with large heart-shaped leaves; the root is the part most esteemed for making the grog (although the lower part of the stems will also answer the purpose), and is either used fresh, or preferably after being dried in the sun. A piece, about the size of a walnut, is chewed, until the fibre has become quite disintegrated, and forms a pulpy mass with the saliva; it is then spat out into a large bowl (two of which are represented in No. 4), and when a sufficient quantity has been collected, cold water is poured upon it, the whole well mixed, and the fibre strained out by means of a strainer made from the fibre of the wild hibiscus. It is now ready for drinking, has a dirty opaque white colour, and tastes like a mixture of soap suds and Turkey rhubarb, but leaves a very agreeable, soft taste in the mouth afterwards.

It has a curious effect on those who indulge in it too freely, for, as it contains no spirit, it affects the nerves rather than the brain, and produces a total incapacity to walk, although the head remains perfectly clear. Old habitués can often be recognised by their weakened sight and blood-shot eyes, but it nevertheless has some valuable medicinal qualities when taken in moderation.

The méké was performed by a dozen of the oldest men in the town, who all sat in a circle round an enormous bowl, and while six of them chewed the root assiduously,

No. 28.—River bank on the Wai-na-Mala.

the others kept up a dismal sort of chant in low bass tones, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and throwing their arms about in a wild sort of manner. When the brew was completed, and the grog properly strained, one man was deputed to hand it round in smaller bowls (No. 4), which were filled by means of a cocoa-nut shell, and they are most particular in giving it to the highest in rank first, and so on down through all present. We were offered it first as guests, but promptly refused (although many of the white inhabitants of Fiji are very fond of it), and it was then taken to the Buli by the man crawling on his knees, for no "kai-si," or common man, may approach a chief without bending his body. He drank it right off without drawing breath (this I found was the correct thing to do, notwithstanding that the bowl held fully a quart), putting his nose into it like a dog, and then threw the bowl away, spitting and spluttering in a most disgusting manner, while all the people present clapped their hands solemnly, and cried out "Vinaka!" "Vinaka!" (good, good). The next in rank then went through the same performance, and so on until everyone had received his share.

As E. was obliged to get back to the plantation, we reluctantly started the next morning on our return journey, and had a good day's sport among the Ika-droka before reaching Wai-basaga, where we again put up for the night. In the very first rapid I hooked and landed the largest fish that had been caught during the trip, as nearly as we could judge about three pounds weight, and a little further on E. pulled eight out of one small rapid, the ravenous way in which they rushed at the flies being quite laughable.

The natives never seemed to get over their astonishment at seeing the fish caught with a fly, and I believe when E. first tried it some time ago, near his own plantation, they were so upset about it, that some of them went to the resident magistrate and asked him if there was no law to prevent the "kai papalagi" (foreigner) taking all their fish out

of the river, They were at first inclined to chaff him, saying "What fools you white men must be to think the fish will eat a chicken's feather, when they wont even look at a worm," but they soon altered their tune when they saw the way in which the fish were hauled out. Their principal method of fishing is by instituting large parties to net the river in the way I shall afterwards describe, but they are very clever in spearing them, and also in shooting them with a bow and arrow. In the former case the man stands on the extreme end of a canoe, with a small spear tipped either with the bony sting of the sting-ray, or a sharpened piece of ivory, which he throws with great precision and strength, generally pinning the fish just on the back of the neck; in the latter case he walks along the bank of the river or in the shallow water, with his bow distended ready for anything he may see, and sometimes stands motionless for hours at some sandy-bottomed shallow part of the river, on the look out for fish going past. We met one man who had shot several with a very ingeniously constructed arrow, round the end of which were lashed five or six old iron umbrella ribs, sharpened at the points, and bent slightly outwards so as to form a circle of sharp points, which considerably increased his chance of hitting the fish.

We continued our way down the river in easy stages, fishing all the streams with more or less success, and shortly after leaving Wai-basaga were asked by some natives to inspect their government coffee plantations. A greater farce I never saw. The plants were all from two to three feet high, and looked like whips, with only two single leaves on the top and no lateral branches, evidently from the want of proper supervision, and from not being stumped at the proper time. These coffee plantations are planted by the natives as a means of paying off their taxes, in a way that I shall afterwards describe.

We found our canoes safe enough where we had left them, and on reaching

No. 29.—Village of Na Vuni Vora, in the Wai-na-Mala.

Na Salía, after about an hour's paddling, the Turaga na Koro told us there was to be a large fishing party the next day, which we decided to stay and see.

Considerably over a hundred men had collected from the surrounding villages, and set about preparing for the sport at daybreak the next morning. About 50 long, split bamboo baskets, tapering to a point (they were about 5 feet long and 1½ feet diameter at the mouth, being very similar in shape to eel pots), and which are generally kept in stock, were first procured, and then all hands set to work to make a wreath, about as thick as a man's body, of creepers and various shrubs from the bush, tied together with "wah" (strong green lianas from the same source), and about a hundred yards long, which was weighted with large stones throughout its entire length. A suitable place was chosen on the river, where two long deep pools, each several hundred yards in length, were joined together by a broad shallow rapid, and reaching about half way across this rapid a dam of loose shingle was built in the shape of a V, with the point down stream, and along the sides and at the point of this dam the baskets were imbedded at regular intervals, so that all the water at that side of the rapid, and, consequently, all the fish it contained, would pass into the baskets.

A string of men were now posted across the upper end of the upper pool to prevent the fish going further up the river, and the wreath and the rest of the men were told off to the bottom end of the lower pool. One end of the wreath was towed across to the opposite side of the river, and the whole was slowly dragged along the bottom by several men on the bank at each end, whilst the others jumped into the water, and swimming backwards and forwards along the line of the wreath, kept continually diving, and making the most fiendish row to prevent the fish from breaking back. If the wreath stuck for a moment on the bottom, two or three would promptly dive and release it.

On arriving at the rapid, a cordon of men with sticks were placed close together across the open half, up which the fish had escaped into the upper pool, and the wreath was taken to the upper end, where the same performance was repeated, it being brought slowly down the pool, with the natives diving and yelling after it as before. On again approaching the rapid, the fish (which were getting pretty thick) could be seen constantly jumping out of the water, and the excitement amongst the natives became intense. Their yelling was perfectly deafening, and they beat the water with their sticks, and danced about like maniacs, until at last all made a rush for the V-shaped dam, falling over each other in their eagerness to get at the baskets, which were immediately raised out of the water and brought to land, some of them being cram full of fish, and very few without a decent quantity. Of course, a good many had escaped by jumping over the dam, and others had got back through the beaters, but altogether it was a very respectable haul.

The fish that is mostly caught in this way is the "Ika-loa," called by Europeans the black mullet, and is, to my mind, the most delicious fish I have tasted south of the equator. It runs up to 10 lbs. or 12 lbs. in weight, and probably much larger, and is quite black along the back, shading into a dirty white on the belly; the body is long and well shaped, and the head small, with a very small mouth. Unfortunately, it won't look at a fly, or even a worm (I have not tried a minnow), and appears to feed on the green weed which covers the huge boulders in the upper part of the river, for it is never caught in the lower reaches. I dissected several, and found nothing but a sort of greenish mud in their stomachs. We bought a good many from the natives, as they are also very good eating when slightly salted and smoked, and will keep for some time in this condition.

No. 30.—Natives in ordinary dress, consisting of a single banana leaf.

The natives themselves, after a haul of this sort, sit down systematically to eat them all as soon as possible, and as it often takes them several days, the fish get quite putrid before they have finished, and taint the atmosphere for some distance around, but they don't seem to object to it in this state in the least. They are certainly not particular in their diet, and I don't believe there is a living thing that crawls or flies they will not eat.

I remember seeing some girls, who were weeding on my brother's plantation, each with a small length of bamboo in the left hand, into which they popped everything they could catch in the shape of grasshoppers, beetles, caterpillars, chrysalises, etc.; these are afterwards either eaten raw, or the bamboo containing them is placed on the fire until it cracks with the heat, when the contents is considered to be cooked. A bush rat (the only indigenous quadruped) is a great luxury, and, on one starting, nothing could prevent the girls throwing down their weeding knives and giving chase; they very seldom failed to catch it, and generally did so by squashing it with their feet.

Poor Makala's admiration for the fair sex got him into some trouble at Na Salia. He was given some of the fish to cook for supper which we had just seen caught, but, as there was no pot large enough for them in the house in which we were located, he took them to another house in the village, where he managed to borrow one. Thinking him rather long, E.'s wife went to hunt him up, when she found him the centre of a group of some 20 girls, laughing and chatting away pleasantly, while every drop of water had evaporated out of the pot, and the fish lay burnt at the bottom. Makala's ears must have tingled for some time afterwards, for he got them well boxed, there and then, before all his female admirers, who fled precipitately when they saw the "marama" (lady) at the door. However, it did not seem to have much moral effect on him, for, on being

sent the next morning down to the river to wash some clothes, he was discovered sitting on the end of a canoe, entertaining some dusky beauties who were performing their morning ablutions. He was certainly a terrible boy for the ladies, and a source of constant anxiety to the "marama."

The day after the fishing party we had another try for birds, taking two small Fijian boys with us, as it was not Sunday, and walked over a good many miles of country, and up and down some very steep hills, which were very tedious climbing, owing to the wet, clayey nature of the soil, making one slip about constantly. We were obliged to keep along narrow tracks through the bush the whole way, and were no more successful than before, a few of the ordinary grey pigeons being all that was bagged.

I afterwards learnt that there were only some eighty different species of birds, including sea-fowl, in the whole of the archipelago, so it was not surprising that we did not see more animal life in the bush, although for the matter of that, I think a tropical bush is always disappointing to a novice, who imagines that numberless birds ought to be flying about in every direction, whereas they want careful and assiduous looking for, partly on account of the thickness of the evergreen foliage, which makes it most difficult to see what bird-life may be present, and partly because they generally congregate at some particular spot, attracted by some flowering or fruit-bearing tree on which they feed.

I eventually succeeded in getting about half the number of species, but it cost me a considerable amount of time and patience, for I found it almost useless to wander promiscuously about the bush, and only obtained them by learning from the natives when certain trees were in flower, or particular sorts of fruit and berries ripe, when by waiting patiently underneath the trees most of the honeysuckers could be shot on the former, and the different species of doves and pigeons on the latter.

No. 31.—Samuelli, a native missionary, and family.

Several species of hawks were very numerous about the cleared plantation patches (I obtained four different species, one being a fine falcon, and another a blue-grey hawk, closely resembling the ordinary Fijian pigeon in colour), where they came to pick up the grasshoppers and lizards, and, contrary to their usually shy disposition, were so tame that I frequently had to frighten them up before shooting them.

The dove family seems to be the best represented (I obtained six different species), and includes some lovely and unique specimens. The "Boi-droma," "Buniko" (*Chrysœna luteovirens*), or "barking dove," is perhaps the most curious. The whole of the upper part of the body, and also the neck and breast, are bright greenish-yellow, with a metallic-green lustre round the edges of the feathers in certain lights, and each feather on the neck and breast stands out quite separate from the rest; the belly, under tail coverts, beneath the wings, and a narrow band round the top of the neck, are bright canary-yellow; the head is olive-green, the bill, bare space round the eye, feet, and tarsi, are a light sea-green, and the eye a whitish-grey. But the most curious part about it is its call, which so closely resembles the sharp bark of a small terrier that it is difficult to persuade a new-comer that it is really the voice of a bird, and I have been deceived myself after several months' stay in the country. It generally goes about alone, or at most in couples, and sits perfectly motionless on some high forest tree, uttering its peculiar bark, where it is most difficult to see amongst the light-green foliage. It never hops about like most birds, but flies straight away when it once moves, so that I have often stood peering up into a tree for a long time, and had the mortification of seeing it fly away after all.

The "Saukula" (*Ptilopus Perousii*) is another beautiful dove. The face, neck, and breast, are white with a slight yellow tinge, the latter being speckled with magenta, and

each feather standing out separately as in the Boi-droma; the back is olive-green, with a broad band of magenta across the shoulders; the wings are grey, each feather being edged with metallic-green, the belly white, tail grey, and the under tail coverts and the top of the head a bright magenta, with a slight metallic lustre. The eye is greyish-white. It makes a loud noise with its wings when flying, and has the characteristic "cooing" of a dove, finishing up with a long trill. It appears to be more gregarious than the yellow dove, and may often be seen flying about in flocks, especially when the berries of certain trees are ripe. I have several times sat for hours together, hidden beneath a huge "baka" tree, waiting for them to come and feed on the small red berries, of which they are particularly fond; in this way many may be shot, for they seem to be quite unable to resist the berries, and soon return, even after being repeatedly disturbed.

The "Buni damu" (*Chrysœna Victor*), or orange dove, is also unique in its way. Its entire plumage is a bright orange-red, with the exception of the head, which is olive-green, and the eye is whitish-grey as in the two last-mentioned species. It is, I believe, only found in the islands of Taviuni and Vanua Levu, and has, if anything, a more extraordinary voice than the "barking dove," resembling a short, sharp "click," most difficult to describe; in fact, it is more like the noise a cricket makes, than what one would expect from a bird. It has the same solitary habits as its relation on Viti Levu, but is more easily seen, on account of its brilliant plumage.

Curiously enough, the hens of all these three doves are almost precisely alike, thus pointing to the probability of their originally coming from the same stock. Their plumage is green throughout, shading into a yellowish colour under the belly; the hen of the "orange dove" is of a somewhat darker green than the others, and the hen of the

No. 32.—Taito, a native ordained minister, and family.

"Saukula" has a dull purple patch on the crown of the head, but in other respects they are very similar.

There are several other remarkable birds, which would take up too much space to describe, but I cannot leave the subject without mentioning the gorgeous little parrokeet called by the natives the "Kula" (*Coriphilus solitarius*). The whole of the face, neck, and breast are a bright rose colour; the head and back part of the neck are deep blue-purple, which is also the colour of the belly and thighs; below the purple on the back of the neck comes a rim of long light green hackles, and below this again a rim of very long and fine rose-coloured hackles; the back and upper surface of wings are olive-green, the upper and under tail coverts the most brilliant phosphorescent light green, and the tail dark green blotched with yellow. The legs, feet, and bill are a light salmon colour, the latter being tipped with orange-red, and the irides are light red. It is exclusively a honey eater, and very shy, requiring a great deal of patient waiting under some flowering-tree before it can be shot. The natives often catch them with a sort of bird-lime, made from the juice of the India-rubber tree (which runs out freely on making an incision in the bark), and use the breast feathers largely in decorating their head-dresses, likus, fans, etc. They quickly become very tame in captivity, flying about the house in the most sociable way, and never straying far away. E.'s wife has had several of them at different times, but never could induce them to take anything but sugar and water and a little sugar-cane, which they sometimes like to peck at.

We continued our journey down the river early the next morning, and had many opportunities of seeing the dexterity with which the natives shoot the rapids, which, at this distance up the river, were very steep and boisterous. It was perfectly wonderful the way they avoided the huge rocks and boulders in mid-stream with a turn of the

paddle, when going at a terrific pace, and made the journey a most exciting and never-to-be-forgotten one, for what could be more enjoyable than gliding swiftly and smoothly through the most beautiful tropical scenery, which, owing to the frequent windings of the river, was constantly changing its aspect. Our rapid progress allowed no time for any particular view to get monotonous, and we rushed swiftly past villages, and down rapids which we remembered toiling slowly and wearily up a few days before. The ducks, too, gave us much better sport on the way down, for the canoes came upon them so swiftly and noiselessly, they seemed to have no time to collect their thoughts, and suffered in consequence.

We came upon a very pretty sight just before reaching Nai Ruku Ruku (a town I mentioned on the way up the river), where we were to spend the night. Ten or a dozen girls were swimming down the river in company, and singing, or rather "mékéing," at the top of their voices. Each one had an old banana-tree stump, which is very buoyant, and over which they threw sometimes one arm and sometimes the other, so as to support their bodies without exertion, while they propelled themselves with their legs. I never saw such a wild, noisy crew; they seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, and were full of fun, ducking each other constantly, and shrieking with laughter. They sometimes travel for twenty miles or more in this way without stopping; it is by far the easiest and quickest mode of progression if they do not possess a canoe, and by keeping together, and making as much noise as possible, the sharks are too much frightened to interfere with them.

Taito, the ordained Fijian minister, met us at the landing-place, according to promise, and conducted us to his own house, which he placed at our disposal, so that, for once, we were private, for he would not allow any of the townspeople to come in.

No. 33.—Native teachers and school children at Na Ruku Ruku.

The house, though small, was beautifully clean, and the mats on the floor were so spotless that we felt compelled to take off our boots before entering; his wife presented us with some beautifully printed "tappa" (native cloth), and the daughter (who was the best-looking Fijian girl I had as yet seen) rolled up "Seluka's" for us to smoke. Altogether we spent a most comfortable night, and the next morning, before starting, I took a photograph (No. 32) of Taito, his wife, two children, and two fellow missionaries, and also (No. 33) the school children of the town, with a group of native teachers who happened to be there at the time. The latter had just come up from Bau (the chief native town of Fiji), and were building a house for Taito before being distributed all over the islands to preach the gospel.

This was to be our last day, and, as we had plenty of time, we agreed to try a small creek for ducks, which our men had pointed out to us on the way up. We soon arrived at the entrance, and after winding our way up a very narrow creek for about half a mile, suddenly emerged on to a small inland lake, about two miles in length, surrounded with a thick belt of reeds and wild sugar-cane, and the surface of which was simply swarming with duck. On the first shot they flew up in hundreds, but did not condescend to go far, and settled on the water again a few hundred yards a-head. It was evidently a regular breeding place for them, and they were making their first acquaintance with a gun, which they did not seem to understand at all. Our cartridges were, unfortunately, coming to an end, but we managed to bag six brace before they gave out, and lost a couple of brace in the long grass for want of a dog; however, we promised ourselves another day at them before long, and, as the afternoon was getting on, we made the best of our way home, and arrived just as it was getting dark, having all enjoyed our trip immensely.

I don't think, however, that any of us were sorry for the luxury of a soft bed, after nearly three weeks of more or less hard Fijian floors, not to mention the pleasure of once more eating off a table and sitting on a chair.

No. 34.—A club méké.

## Part III.—*A Vaka-Missionary.*

ABOUT a week after our return from the mountains, I heard that a "Vaka-Missionary" was to be held at Na Koro Vatu (No. 17), the large town a few miles above Na Soqo, on the Wai-na-Mala, and as this meant some good "mékés," or dances, in costume, I was very anxious to get some pictures of them, as they had never been photographed before. With the kind assistance of the Wesleyan ministers Messrs. Lindsay and Jory, I succeeded in getting some very characteristic groups, and to make them intelligible will give a short description of what a "Vaka-Missionary" is.

The Wesleyan mission claims nearly all the converts in the Fiji Islands, with the exception of a few Roman Catholics, and is, consequently, a very important and influential body, requiring a regular system of organisation. The head-quarters of the mission, under the personal supervision of the Rev. Mr. Langham, are at Bau, the native capital of Fiji, situated on a small island of the same name, near the eastern mouth of the Rewa river, and close to the mainland of Viti Levu.

Here the old King Cakobau (pronounced Thakombau) lives, when he is not on a visit to Levuka, and here are the mission buildings, where the young men from different parts of the group are taught to read the Bible (translated into Fijian), sing hymns, and do a little arithmetic, etc., so that they may afterwards go amongst their

own people as teachers. They are pretty hard worked in the districts where they settle down, as they are supposed to teach the children, hold morning and evening prayers with hymns, and officiate about four times during the day on Sunday in the native churches. For this the mission pays them a small salary, and the people of the district have to supply them with food, etc. Their singing is very crude, and although Mrs. Langham has taken infinite pains to teach them, with the aid of the piano, such easy tunes as the "Evening Hymn" and several others, it is very difficult to recognise them, they sing so terribly flat, and invariably finish up with an entirely wrong note.

The whole system naturally entails a large expenditure, and as, I believe, the mission now receives little, if any, assistance from England, they are obliged to screw it out of the native population by what is called voluntary contributions, and for this object the "Vaka-Missionary" is held.

The largest town of some particular district is chosen for the ceremony, and notice is sent to all the villages for miles around that on a certain day they must bring their voluntary contributions and offerings to the mission. One or two white missionaries are always present to hold the meeting, supported by several of their black brethren, who certainly look most respectable in their clean white shirts. They very wisely encourage the "mékéing," or dancing, at these meetings, for there is no doubt it is the principal inducement for the people to collect together.

Each village in turn has to perform a "méké," and of course there is a considerable amount of rivalry amongst them, as they pride themselves upon their dancing above everything, and the critical eyes of hundreds of their friends are upon them. Sometimes one large village will have as many as three separate "mékés," one performed by the children, another by the women, and a third by the men; consequently, if the district is

No. 35.—A "VAKA MISSIONARY" IN VITI LEVU.

No. 36.—Spear méké.

a large one, the ceremony often lasts for three whole days, and continues far into the nights, when the dancing is carried on by torchlight. It is a very impressive sight to see the hundreds of eager eyes, and motionless, half-naked bodies, watching with intensest interest every movement of the wild dance, by the red glare of the large flaming bamboos.

But to return to the beginning. A large mat is spread on the ground at one end of the "rara" (the large open space in the middle of every Fijian town), and behind this the white missionaries, their friends, and black supporters, take up their position, while the natives form a thick ring round the outside (No. 35).

The people from the first village on the list (except those who are to dance, and who are now adorning themselves in some banana grove for a green room), now come forward, and headed by their band, walk in single file past the mat, throwing on to it their contributions, whatever they may be. Money is greatly preferred, but sometimes the contributions take the form of yams, taro, yaqona, etc.

I cannot say that the offerings struck me as being given in a very voluntary spirit, to judge from the reluctant way in which most of them parted with their sixpence or shilling; one little fellow, I remember, stoutly refused to throw away his threepenny-piece, and had to be carried up to the mat, howling horribly, by his mother, who made him throw it down much against his will. Many are induced to contribute more than they otherwise would do by a sort of rivalry amongst themselves, which is of course fostered by the missionaries. Thus, if a man throws down sixpence, no notice whatever is taken of it, but if a shilling is contributed, the missionary probably shouts out "Vinaka!" (good), in a loud voice; if two shillings are given, "Vinaka! Vinaka!" is called out still louder, and if this has the effect of bringing still more on the mat, "Vinaka! Vinaka indeena!" (very good indeed) is not considered too encouraging, while if some big chief is thus

induced to contribute five or six shillings, the black as well as the white missionaries join in the chorus of "Vinaka, Vinaka indeena sara!" (magnificent), which greets the big man as he struts away as proud as possible.

The natives dress in their best on these occasions, putting on any little bit of finery they may have picked up at the up-country stores, but some of the girls still prefer to appear in their native costume (Nos. 26 and 27), and really look very handsome and picturesque in their "likus" (a fringe round the waist), made from the fibre of the wild hibiscus, or from shredded pandanus leaves, stained red or yellow (No. 3), large scarlet hibiscus flowers in their hair, and their naked bodies so saturated with sandal-wood scented cocoa-nut oil, that they look like polished bronze. The constant oiling makes the skin very sleek in appearance, and smooth to the touch, and no doubt acts as a great protection from the fierce rays of the sun. Neither men nor women tattoo themselves as a rule, but often make patterns on their backs, breasts, and stomachs, by cutting themselves with a sharp bamboo, and thus raising the flesh in small oblong lumps.

When the whole village has filed past the mat, the band takes up its position in one corner of the "rara," squatting on the ground in a circle. The instruments consist of a small "lali" or drum (a piece of wood two or three feet long, shaped and hollowed out like a canoe, which is laid on its side on the ground, and beaten with two stout sticks), and numerous hollow bamboos of different lengths and diameters, which, when struck end-ways on the ground, give forth a sort of booming sound. All the performers sing, and those who have no instruments clap their hands. Of course, there is no attempt at melody, but the combined effect is rather pleasing, and the time they keep is perfect.

The band now commences to play a symphony, and all eyes are eagerly on the

No. 37.—Fan and bamboo méké.

look out for the first appearance of the dancers, who may turn up from any quarter, for there is no appointed entrance for them. I have sometimes waited as long as 15 minutes, the band playing the whole time, before they have made their appearance, for it sometimes seems to be part of the programme to keep you in suspense, and a breathless silence is kept by the assembled crowd, who are too much interested in the performance to show the slightest sign of impatience. At last they appear, coming round the corner of some house, or out of some neighbouring banana clump, with a very slow, measured step, and the crowd at that point at once makes way for them.

If it is a club méké, they generally walk in, either two abreast (as in No. 38), or in single file, and on reaching the centre of the "rara" stand perfectly motionless for a minute or so. They then commence with a slow movement, and attitudinise in a very curious way, swinging their clubs in graceful curves round their heads, while one of the number, who is often a boy, takes the lead, and shouts out his directions as the dance proceeds. They all do exactly the same step, and finish up a movement in perfect time with the band, which gradually leads them on quicker and quicker until they get to a most exciting pitch, and whirl their heavy clubs about in a truly marvellous manner, sometimes pretending to flee from an enemy, and then turning suddenly upon him, sometimes sinking down on their knees for mercy, and, indeed, going through an infinite number of evolutions representing a hand to hand conflict, finishing up with some extraordinary attitude amidst the applause of the multitude.

But, although the figures are so complicated, you will observe that every man does exactly the same step, and keeps time in a way that would put to shame any ballet dance I have ever witnessed; in fact, so strict and exacting is the audience in the latter respect, that I have even seen the performers hissed off the ground, in the middle of a

dance, because one or two of their number have made some slight mistake, quite undiscernible to one uninitiated in the performance.

The dance being over, the band smash all their bamboos on the ground, and the performers often throw off all their finery—which consists, as a rule, of many yards of fine "tappa"—at the feet of any visitors who may be present, or cast it off in the middle of the ring itself, for anyone to take possession of who likes. It is, however, often so saturated with cocoa-nut oil, with which they freely annoint their bodies on these occasions, as to be almost useless. The next village now files past the mat, and they have their one or two "mékés," as the case may be, and so on through the whole list, so that it is not surprising that it takes so long to get the business done, and the missionaries must be blest with a large stock of patience to sit through all the dances, which are, of course, no novelty to them.

It is extraordinary the quantity of stuff a man piles on to himself in these dances (as will be seen from the photographs), and still more extraordinary how he manages to dance when he has it on. Their sole object seems to be to put as much "tappa" round their bodies in festoons as they can possibly get to stick, and they are also fond of blacking their faces (as if they were not black enough naturally), or painting them half black and half red, or entirely red, with the vermilion-coloured juice surrounding the seeds of the "anatto," which grows abundantly in the bush. They also tie grass, ornamented with beads, round their legs, and decorate their heads with great bows or pyramids of "tappa."

No. 36, a spear méké, was very good. We had quite a long symphony before any one showed himself, and then first one and then another appeared, coming round all sorts of corners and out of all sorts of queer places. They advanced a step or two, and

No. 38.—Club méké.

No. 39.—Women's méké.

then stood perfectly still for a few seconds, quivering their spears above their heads in a most menacing manner, while the band kept playing a wild sort of measure. This they repeated until all met from different directions in the middle, when they commenced a series of beautiful evolutions in consort, and sometimes rushed up with their spears unpleasantly near our faces; each had also a club in the left hand—and I managed to catch them as represented just as they were standing in one of their attitudes.

No. 37, a fan and bamboo méké, was another very curious one. Each alternate dancer had a large war fan, made from a single leaf of the fan-palm, and the others had pieces of bamboo some two feet long. They were most elaborately dressed, and all had their faces blackened. They also wore breastplates made of a tortoise-shell centre surrounded with flat slabs of ivory (whales' teeth ground down), necklaces of wild pigs' tusks, or whales' teeth ground down with infinite labour to narrow tapering points, and curious cross arrangements, which were stuck beneath their tappa turbans, so as to project over the face. One of them on the left-hand side had an enormous imitation pig's tusk in porcelain, evidently manufactured in Birmingham, but how he became the happy possessor of it I can't imagine,

No. 39 is a women's méké, and, although a poor photograph, was a most picturesque sight. They were completely covered with green vines and creepers from the bush, which were woven into long wreaths, and wound gracefully round their bodies, and their short crisp hair was painted in different curious patterns in vermilion and white. They do not dance like the men, but stand opposite each other in two long lines, or quietly move in and out between each other, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards and gesticulating with their hands, at the same time singing a slow monotonous chant without the accompaniment of the band.

Some mékés are much more elaborate than those described above, and represent some incident in natural history, as "the robbing of a hen's nest by bush rats," or some natural phenomena, as "the breaking of the surf on the coral reef," and are really very cleverly carried out. One very fine méké given at Levuka in honour of the young princes' visit, represented a human sacrifice, many men being dressed up as women to be sacrificed, and several hundreds taking part in the performance. A fish méké was also given on that occasion, when all the performers got themselves up as different kinds of fish in the most marvellous way.

In fact, there is an endless variety of them, and some take weeks, and even months, in rehearsing.

No. 40.— Boys' méké.

## Part IV.—*The Wai-na-Buka.*

THE few photographs representing scenes on the Wai-na-Buka were taken during a short trip of five days that E., C., and myself made, to test the capabilities of the river as a shooting and fishing preserve.

It will be remembered that the Wai-na-Buka joins the Wai-na-Mala about half-a-mile below Na Soqo. It flows through a comparatively flat country from a north-easterly direction before forming the junction, and the scenery on its banks is nothing like so pretty or so interesting as that on the Wai-na-Mala. In fact, the character of the river is entirely different, for instead of the fine expanse of open country, high and picturesque mountain ranges, and wide shingly bed of the latter, it flows for the most part between high wooded banks, which, although beautiful in themselves, prevent one getting any view of the surrounding country, whilst the almost entire absence of rapids, until the unnavigable part of the river is reached, makes the fishing very inferior. During the whole of our first day's journey, we scarcely passed a single rapid worthy of the name, and our bag was consequently a small one—seven Ika-droka. Ducks, however, were very plentiful, and we shot six and a-half brace before stopping for the night at a village called "Bourinetu."

The long still stretches of water we had passed through, often several miles in

length without a break, seemed eminently suitable for trolling, and I have heard, since returning to England, that E. has had some grand sport there with some artificial minnows I sent out to him, catching some very heavy Sanka and Ika-droka.

We put up in the native teacher's house at Bourinetu, which was surrounded by a neatly kept garden, full of hibiscus flowers, gardenias, Fijian feathers, and several species of gaudy crotans, which did credit to the taste of the inmates.

As the ducks would not keep, we had all the breasts cut off and cooked for ourselves, and gave all the rest to the men, who made very short work of them, and after picking the bones as clean as possible, called in some women belonging to the village, who sucked the bones all over again with great gusto, and seemed to be quite contented with their share of the feast. The fact is, the women are never allowed to eat before the men, and get so accustomed to their subordinate condition in every way, that they are quite satisfied to finish off anything the latter may choose to leave.

All the next day we continued through much the same sort of scenery, except that the banks were not quite so high, and allowed us from time to time to catch a glimpse of a rather flat country covered with thick bush. The banks, themselves, were thickly clothed with a wonderful variety of fine foliage and flowering plants, amongst which I recognised the large variegated leaves of the tapioca, numerous papaw trees, the arrowroot with its fine deep crimson flowers, forming conspicuous objects in the landscape, and the minute but gaudy scarlet and yellow blossoms of the ipecacuanha, which existed in such large clusters as to form a pleasant contrast to the everlasting green, while the enormous pointed, heart-shaped leaves of the wild "taro" (*Arum esculentum*) fringed the water's edge, giving the whole a thoroughly tropical aspect.

Ducks were as plentiful as on the preceding day, and our men kept such a sharp

No. 41.—Na Beta, village on the upper Wai-na-Buka.

No. 42.—Scene on the river Wai-na-Buka.

look-out, and were so keen for us to get them (now they knew they would come in for the largest share), that we bagged seven brace, besides losing several in the "vico" for want of a dog. C. made a very curious shot, killing three ducks with one barrel, as they were coming straight towards him in a line, with apparently a yard or two between each.

We stopped for tiffin at one of the few rapids we had as yet met with, and while E. was working it right through with the hope of getting something to fill the pot, I took a photograph (No. 42) of the big pool below, and the opposite bank of the river, on which were growing some fine specimens of a palm, called by the natives "Niu Sawa," and which has very much the character of the ordinary areca palm, with a long straight spike shooting perpendicularly out of the crown of feathery leaves.

We passed during the day numerous maize plantations, grown by the natives to pay off their yearly tax of one pound a-head to the government, which they are not allowed to pay in coin, and as most of it was just ripening, boys were perched all over the country on trees, left standing in the middle of the maize fields on purpose, blowing conches all day and night long, to keep away the parrots from the miserable thin patches of corn, which had received much more injury from neglect and want of proper weeding when young, than the parrots were likely to do it. There seems to be no supervision whatever over these government plantations, and, as the natives are much too lazy to work on their own account, the corn suffers in consequence.

In fact the whole system of native taxation, as instituted by Sir Arthur Gordon, seems to be a most absurd and iniquitous one, but it would take up too much space to go thoroughly into it here; suffice it to say, that thousands of natives are willing and anxious to work for white planters, but have hitherto not been allowed to do so, because

all their time is supposed to be taken up in producing the wherewithal to pay their taxes. Sir Arthur's object was, no doubt, to teach them habits of industry, and nobody can blame him for that, but as it has signally failed the sooner some other plan is tried the better.

Many of the smaller planters are almost ruined, owing to the scarcity of labour (the annual supply from the Solomon Islands and New Hebrides being almost nil this year), and yet there are thousands of natives at their doors whom they cannot hire.

The absurd part of it is, that the native by this scheme can never earn anything for himself, for although what money the crop from any particular district fetches, over and above the tax of one pound a-head, is returned to the natives, it has to filter through so many hands, that the "kai-si," or common labourer, very seldom gets anything at all, or at most a few shillings. The chief of the district, of course, takes the lion's share, and then the next in rank takes his, and so on.

Now if the native worked for a planter, the latter would not only willingly pay the man's tax of a pound to the government, but would also give several pounds a-year for a salary to the man himself, according to some fixed rate. It will, no doubt, be altered in time, but in the interim many small planters will have a very hard time of it.

We stopped for the night at Na Beta (No. 41), where a curious cocoa-nut palm, oecupying the centre of the "rara," had been blown all awry by a recent hurricane.

The village was so dirty, and the floors so hard, that we were glad to get away early in the morning and continue our journey up the river, more especially as the pigs seemed to have the run of the place, and frequently came in to see how we were getting on in the night, probably smelling the remains of our supper.

The scenery above here became very uninteresting. The fine bush had entirely

No. 43.—Roko Vuaka, village at the head of the Wai-na-Buka.

disappeared, a solitary tree here and there being all that was left of it, and its place was taken by long stretches of low hills, covered with what looked at a distance like coarse green grass, but which proved on a nearer inspection to be the impenetrable "vico." This wild sugar-cane grows to a height of twelve or fifteen feet; its roots and stems are so interlaced together that they form a perfect network, and make it utterly impassable, and its sharp, serrated-edged leaves cut the unwary to the bone. Many a time have I attempted to penetrate it after a wounded or dead duck, but have always been baffled, and sent back with "barked" shins, and bleeding hands and face.

About mid-day the rapids were becoming so boisterous that it seemed impossible to proceed much further, and our canoe men wanted us to pull up at a village where we had just arrived. However, we were determined to push on, if possible, and suffered for our temerity at the very next rapid, in which we were ignominiously swamped. The water was so swift, that all the efforts of the polers could not keep the bows of the canoe straight, and, having once got slightly turned, it rapidly swung broadside on, and filled and sank in a few seconds.

An old woman, who was passing at the time, threw down her load of yams, and gallantly came to our rescue, plunging into the water without the slightest hesitation, but we managed to reach the bank without her assistance, and just had time to seize our guns and cartridges before the canoe disappeared. Luckily, our second canoe, with the kit, was some distance behind, but all our little nick-nacks went to the bottom, including a can full of live fish, the result of a hard morning's fishing.

The old lady was most indefatigable in diving for our lost effects, and, with the aid of some boys from a neighbouring village, recovered almost everything. But we were not to be discouraged so easily by this mishap, and, after righting our canoe,

persevered for another mile or so, when, at last, we came face to face with a fall several feet high, which effectually barred our further progress, and forced us to reluctantly turn back, and put up for the night at the village of Roko Vuaka (the Prince of the Pigs).

We had thus been two days and a half getting to the head of the river, as far as the limit of canoe navigation was concerned, and were only a few miles from the north-east coast of Viti Levu, a low range of "vico" covered hills separating us from Viti Levu Bay.

No. 43 is part of the village of Roko Vuaka. It is a regular pig-sty, as the name leads one to expect, being a dirty, insignificant little place, but I took a photograph on account of the beautiful fan palm in the centre, whose leaves are used for making the great war fans, and are much prized by the natives.

Our homeward journey commenced the next morning, and we proceeded rapidly down the stream, stopping a few times to fish, and having some capital shooting. I also shot two very pretty kingfishers and a small bittern, very much like one of our English varieties, but birds, as a rule, were just as scarce and difficult to get as on the Wai-na-Mala.

We passed Na Beta, where we had stayed on the way up, early in the afternoon, and reached Drek-na-Wai before nightfall. This is the largest town on the river, and is placed at the junction of the Wai Loa and the Wai-na-Buka, on the left bank of the latter.

No. 45 represents a long, straggling sort of street in the town, with a child's grave in the right-hand corner, over which has been placed a piece of gaudily-printed Manchester cloth. Many of the up-country towns have no regular burial grounds, but

No. 44.—"Rara" at Drek-na-Wai, Wai-na-Buka.

No. 45.—Village street at Drek-na-Wai, Wai-na-Buka.

just bury their dead (now they are not allowed to eat them) promiscuously about the town. No. 44 represents the "rara" and the Turaga-na-Koro's house, with a row of the inhabitants dressed up like monkeys for the occasion.

My walking-stick gun had been heard of even here, and the Turaga-na-Koro, who was most anxious to see the effect of it, asked me to go and kill a fowl, which he wished to give us for dinner. This was rather large game for so small a gun, but I could not very well get out of it, and sallied out to stalk the cock, with the whole village at my back. I must say I felt rather nervous, as my reputation and that of the gun were at stake, and the fowls were so frightened at the large concourse of people that it was fully a quarter of an hour before I could get a shot, when I luckily bowled the rooster over just as he was running out of a banana clump, some twenty yards away. The successful shot was greeted with loud applause and exclamations of delight, and the wretched bird was almost pulled to pieces by the excited sportsmen, who rushed to pick him up; however, it completely established the reputation of the gun, which was respected by the natives ever after.

A short day's easy paddling from here landed us home again at Na Soqo, with seven and a-half brace of ducks we had shot on the way, and a few Ika-droka, picked up by trolling a fly.

We left Na Soqo, with many regrets, on the 5th of September, having spent a most enjoyable four months in the interior of the island. On reaching Suva we crossed over to Levuka, the former capital, which is situated on the island of Ovalau, and from there visited most of the principal islands of the group.

My stock of dry plates had unfortunately come to an end, so that I was unable to take any more photographs, and as the present sketch of the country was merely

written with a view to making the photographs more intelligible and, I trust, more interesting, I cannot do better than conclude, recommending any one who may have the opportunity, to visit this charming group of islands, one of the least known, but one of the most beautiful of the British possessions.

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